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A FULL
EXAMINATION
OF SEVERAL
Important Points

Relating to
CHURCH-AUTHORITY,
the **CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD,**
the **POSITIVE INSTITUTIONS** of
the **CHRISTIAN RELIGION,** and
CHURCH-COMMUNION.

In ANSWER to the
Notions and Principles contained
in Mr. *Law's* Second **LETTER** to
the Lord Bishop of **BANGOR.**

In a Second **LETTER** to Mr. **LAW.**

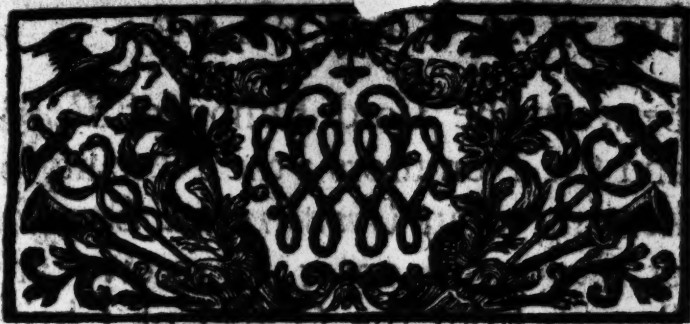
WITH A
POSTSCRIPT,
Wherein his Evasive Answers to Former
Objections are considered.

By **GILBERT BURNET, M.A.**
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

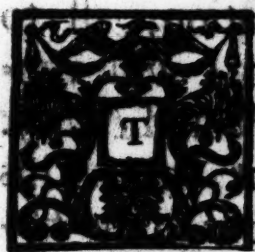
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T H E
P R E F A C E.



TH E following Letter being swelled to a much greater Bulk than I first designed ; I shall give the Reasons that determined me to enlarge upon several Heads in it, instead of an Apology for the Length of it.

When I considered Mr. *Law's* last Letter, I found He went deep into a Matter, (and a Matter of no small Importance,) which the Committee of the *Lower House of Convocation* thought fit to touch upon but slightly : I mean, the main Dispute

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between the Lord Bishop of *Bangor* and the Nonjurors ; the Necessity of keeping to an *Uninterrupted Succession* of *Clergy*, in order to receive any Benefits from the Gospel of Christ, or to perform effectually any of the *Ordinances* therein prescribed. I found that on this uncertain Foundation He laid the whole Weight of Religion ; that He made our Acceptance with God, our Eternal Salvation, all to depend on This, which I will venture to call a mere *Trifle* and *Nicety*. I thought at first sight that This was a *Doctrine* so Injurious to the *Honour* of God, and so contrary to the whole *Design* and *Scope* of the Gospel : that it was not fit to pass it over, without a full Examination ; not only of Mr. *Law*'s particular Arguments in support of that Doctrine, but of the *Principles* themselves, from which Any Arguments in favour of it can be drawn.

An-

The PREFACE.

Another Reason that determined Me to examine this Matter more fully was, that I saw that this *Doctrine* was made the Foundation of Disturbance and Confusion in the State, under the Covert and Shew of Religion. The End of it plainly was, (I do not accuse Mr. *Lowe* in Particular, in having writ with any such View,) to induce weak Men to believe that They could not preserve their *Liberties*, without renouncing their *Christianity*; that the *Schism* (as they call it) made at the *Revolution*, by the Civil Government's depriving the *Bishops* who refused to take the Oaths of *Allegiance* to King *William* and Queen *Mary*, and to give the necessary Security that all Subjects in any Trust are obliged to give, *un-ristened* All who did not adhere to Those *Deprived Bishops*, and to their *Regular Successors*, in Opposition to the *Usurpers* (as they called them) placed in their stead. And tho' this *Doctrine*

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seems only to regard our *Religious Concerns*: yet, I am perswaded, no one thing has had a worse Effect as to our *Civil Peace and Happiness*. For, as *Religion*, when applied to what properly comes within its Sphere, is most Beneficial to the *Happiness of Mankind*, both Present and Future: so when it is, through the Wickedness of Some, and the Weakness of Others, turned into a *State-Engine and Political Tool*, there is scarce any Evil that it may not, and will not, be the Cause of. We have had Instances of late, (and one very Remarkable one,) that Men may be hurried on to the most mad and furious, the most Wicked and Destructive, Practices by *These Principles*. I need not enlarge on this Matter; for it is visible enough to all the World, what Effect these sort of *Religious Principles* have had, within this Kingdom, ever since our Great and Happy Deliverance, from the United

The PREFACE. VII

United Evils of *Tyranny* and *Popery*,
at the *Revolution*.

These were the Views with which
his Lordship professes to have writ
that *Excellent Book*, which I here un-
dertake to defend. And indeed He
has there so fully obviated all the
Objections that have been since raised
against it; that, I believe, many
Thinking and Considerate Men will
be apt to judge there was no great Ne-
cessity of answering *Them*. But, when
they consider the evil Effect that the
Colour and Appearance, or even Pre-
tence, of Argument too often has up-
on the Minds of the Bulk of Man-
kind, who have neither Leisure nor
Inclination to spend much Time on
examining such Matters; and are
easily prejudiced by what has long
passed for *Truth* in the World, and
has been weakly allowed as *Such*, by
Those who, to be consistent with
Themselves, should not have allowed
it: when They consider this, I hope,

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They will not think it a Fruitless Work to follow an *Author* through Fallacy and Absurdity, and Misrepresentation; and to endeavour to make what is really *Plain* to those who will take the Trouble to reflect, yet *Plainer*, by bringing Them to reflect upon it. This his Lordship has done with Relation to the *Objections* raised by the most considerable of his *Adversaries*: And, as I believe, They have taken up so much of his Time, that he has not been able to attend to every Call from *Those* of a *Lower Form*; so I cannot think it Improper, for One who has no other Employment, to examine Minutely every thing that can be urged by *These*; and to suffer no *Colour* or *Fallacy* of *Theirs* to pass with any one for *Truth* and *Reason*; nor any Thing of this Sort to be put upon the World, under the Awful and Venerable *Name of Religion*.

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I am the more confirmed in the Necessity there was of Examining these Principles and Notions of Mr. *Law* thoroughly; and have the greater Satisfaction within my Self, in reflecting upon what I have done: since I have met with an Expression that has lately drop'd from the Pen of the Learned and Reverend *Dean of Chichester*, (Cond. and Example of our Blessed Saviour Vind. p. 62.); where He gives Mr. *Law* this Remarkable Testimony, that He is a *Writer so considerable, that He knows but one good Reason why his Lordship does not answer Him.* When a Writer, really so Considerable as the Reverend *Dean of Chichester*, can pass such a Judgment on a *Book* of this kind, I cannot but think it is high Time to examine very particularly the Arguments and Principles contained in that *Book*: for, if such Fallacies and Misrepresentations can impose on so Great and so Able a Man, the lower Part

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Part of *Mankind* must be under almost an unavoidable and fatal Necessity of being misled by them; unless some Pains be taken to detect them, and to render the Truth plain and open to all Eyes. This I have endeavoured to do to the best of my Abilities. If I have failed in my Attempt, I hope, I may at least deserve Pardon for my Intention. But if, by any thing I have said, I shall give Occasion to others, who are more Able, and more sufficient for the Work, to set this whole Matter in the Plainest and Clearest Light; I shall reap from it all the Satisfaction I desire; and obtain all the End I proposed to my self: which, I can sincerely protest, was no other than to see *Christianity*, and the *Honour* of our Great God and Father, and of his Beloved Son, *Christ Jesus*, rescued from the Injurious and False Representations of Men; who, instead of the *Religion* reveled to Us from God,
invent

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invent to themselves a new *Religion*,
in reality most Opposite to it, and
most Dishonourable to *Almighty God* :
and to see *Christianity* restored to its
Primitive Beauty and Simplicity, and
divested of all that False Splendor
which *Superstition* has cast over it,
and which has too long hid the true
Glory of it from the Eyes of Men ;
who whilst They are captivated by
the dazzling Lustre of what They do
not understand, are easily led to neg-
lect and overlook the Solid and Real
Excellency of what is Intelligible and
Reasonable, and what alone came, or
can be supposed to have come, from
the *Great* and *Wise* Governor of the
World.



CON.

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- P. 40. l. 21. for shall see r. sees.
- P. 64. l. 16. dele their.
- P. 112. l. 22. for Ordinances r. Ordainers.
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- P. 231. l. 7. add 5.
- P. 300. l. 5. for this r. his.



A FULL
EXAMINATION

Of several Important Points relating to
Church-Authority, &c.

IN a LETTER to MR. LAW.

S I R,



AFTER the Lord Bishop
of *Bangor's* full and co-
pious *Answer* to the *Ob-*
jections, against his *Do-*
ctrine, stated in the *Re-*
presentation of the *Com-*
mittee of the *Lower House*
of *Convocation*, and in
the *Writings* of a *Learned Member* of it ;
I should have thought it very needless to
have given the *World*, or *your self*, any
B far-

farther Trouble about a *Controversy*, that seems to be allowed on all Hands, to be now *closed*; and where the main *Points* are visibly given up, even by *Those*, who would still preserve the *Appearance* of differing from his Lordship, in some *Niceties*, that few are capable of understanding, and fewer of seeing in what they differ from him; and that are entirely *foreign* to the main Argument: had I not perceived, that you are going on by your self, upon a *Foundation* wholly *distinct* from what the *Committee*, or any of its *learned Members* think proper to *avow*; and insisting on some *Objections*, which the *learned Committee* did not think of *Importance* enough, to trouble their *Lordships*, the *Bishops*, with; and which therefore his Lordship had no occasion to answer.

The *Foundation*, the *Principles*, you proceed upon, and the *Objections* you start against his Lordship, appear to me so to strike at the *Foundation* of *Religion* it self, and at the *Attributes* of *God*; at the *great Design* of *Christianity*, at the *Honour* and *peculiar Office* of our *Lord* and *Master*; at the *Gospel*, or *good News*, which he revealed; at the *Comfort*, and *Support* that it ought to give *Christians* his *Disciples*; and at the express *Promises* and *Threatnings* of it: that the same *just Concern* for *Truth*,
and

and the first Principles of the Christian Religion, which engaged you in the Examination of his Lordship's Doctrines, obliges me to examine yours at present. Tho' I confess to you, your whole Letter is such a *Heap of Self-contradictions*, and *Ab-surdities*; giving up at one Time, what you assert at another; pretending to prove things without Arguments, and often without even the Colour of Arguments; substituting *Abuses*, wicked *Insinuations*, and frequent *Misrepresentations* in their room; in fine, so far from what either Christianity, or common Sense, would lead one to: that, had it not been for the very great Importance of the Subject, and the great Evil your Notions may do to weak and unsettled Minds; the Despair it may cast good Persons into; and the false Satisfaction and Hope with which it may lay asleep such, as happen to please Those of your Stamp, and may obtain Their Benediction, or Absolution, whilst they are the farthest from obtaining that of Almighty God; I should have thought, I had needed much more Apology, for giving the World, and your self this new Trouble.

But, as the Matter is of such Importance, I shall spare my self no Labour in following you through the three Heads of Doctrine, which you lay down, in order to

examine his Lordship's Notions upon them; of Benedictions, Absolutions, and Church-Communion; and under each of these Heads shall consider, how fairly you have represented the Bishop's Notion, how you have answered his true Notion; and then, shall make bold to examine your own Notions of them, and the Principles on which they are founded; and show you, how consistent they are with the Doctrine, Design, and Institutions of the Christian Religion.



S E C T. I.

Of humane Authoritative Benedictions.

IN order to show you how much you have mistaken, and misrepresented his Lordship's Notions; it is fit, first to consider what he means by *Authoritative Benedictions*, &c. when he denies their Efficacy.

It's evident, he means such *Benedictions*, &c. as being pronounced on *Earth* by *Men*, are pretended to have a *certain* and *constant Effect* given them in *Heaven* by *God*. Such *Declarations* from *Men*, not *infallibly* guided by the *Spirit of God*, when
our

our *Salvation* is made to depend upon them, he very justly calls the *highest Absurdity and Blasphemy*: For this is really to expect the *Grace of God* from other *Hands*, than *his own*; and consequently is to *Affront him*. If the Gospel be true, all must depend upon *God and our selves*; and humane *Benedictions, humane Absolutions, humane Excommunications*, i. e. *Benedictions, &c.* coming from mere *Men*, not infallibly conducted by the *Spirit of God* as the *Apostles* were, (for *such* would not be humane, but *Divine*, and would come from *God himself*,) have nothing to do with the *Favour of God*, as the *Bishop* with reason affirms.

It is evident from these Maxims, (which you please to say he only asserts, as such, but I think he has sufficiently proved, even by demonstrative Arguments, to be such,) I say, it is evident from these, that his Lordship condemns; not whatever Institutions are observed in any Christian Society, upon this Supposition, that thereby Grace is conferred through humane Hands, or by the Ministry of the Clergy: but all such Suppositions, as that the Grace or Favour of God is conferred, not through, but by, humane Hands; in such a manner, as to put it in the Power of frail Fallible Men, to grant or withhold it, as their Passions or

Follies may direct; and not *by the Ministry*, but by the Command and Will, of *the Clergy*.

To support what you have asserted of his *Lordship's Notions*, you instance in three particular *Institutions* of the *Christian Religion*; *Confirmation*, *Ordination*, and the *Consecration* of the *Lord's Supper*.

I. The first Instance you bring is *Confirmation*, which, with an *Emphatical Insinuation*, you say, (*p. 2.*) is an *Institution* in the *YET Established Church of England*; by which you would alarm such as are more moved by *Reflections*, than *Arguments*; as if without these *Notions*, which you espouse, the *Church of England* is undone, and will not much longer be the *Established Church* of these *Realms*: (a common *Out-cry*, not at all peculiar to your self, to make every thing that we delight in, the *Church*; and to annex always to That the *Prosperity*, or *Ruin* of it!) But I cannot help thinking, that it is a *Consideration* much more becoming a *Christian*, not what just supports any private *Establishment*, be it never so good in it self, but what concerns the general *Interest* of our *Holy Religion*, and what is most consonant to the *Will*, and *express Declarations* of *Christ* our *Master*; the agreeing with which ought to be the only

only Reason for supporting *Any Establishment*. And *this*, I hope to convince you, before I have done, that your *Notions* directly oppose, and contradict.

To begin with *Confirmation*: You let us know, (p. 2.) that *it* (that is, our *Confirmation*) is founded, upon the express Words of Scripture, Primitive Observance, and the universal Practice of all succeeding Ages in the Church: the last a Foundation, proper only to bear such a Superstructure as the Church of Rome has raised upon it; but no Rule at all to Protestants, or Christians! And no other Primitive Observance is a Rule to us, but such very Primitive Observance, as was settled by the Apostles themselves; and of which we have Authentick Accounts, either in their own Writings, or in the Writings of those who were continually with them, were constant Eye-Witnesses to all that they did, and knew all their Doctrine and Practice themselves. And the only Authentick Accounts of this sort, that ever I could hear any tolerable Arguments for, and which alone are received by Protestants, as a Rule of Faith, are what we call the Scriptures, or Writings of the New Testament; which brings every other Rule to your first Foundation, The express Words of Scripture. I shall examine how far our present *Confir-*

mation is founded on *Scripture*, after having first taken Notice of a *gross Misrepresentation* of the Bishop.

When you have built up your Notion of *Confirmation*, upon both *Divine* and *humane Authority*, (which you couple most strangely together,) and affirmed it, to be a *Means* of conferring *Grace*, by the *Prayer* and *Imposition* of the *Bishop's Hands*; you cry out, and yet against all this *Authority*, both *Divine* and *humane*, and the express *Order* of our own Church, your *Lordship* teaches the *Laity* that all *humane Benedictions* are *useless Niceties*; and that to expect *God's Grace* from any *Hands*, but his own, is to affront him. And the main of what you say in the four following Pages, on this Subject, is only enlarging on this *Misrepresentation*.

What *Benedictions* are they, that the Bishop calls *humane*, (but never, as I know of, *useless Niceties*,) but such as our *Salvation* is made to depend upon; and such as, tho' conferred by *Fallible Persons*, are supposed to have a *certain*, and *constant Effect* upon it? And these you your self give up, when you feel the *Absurdity* of maintaining them, p. 21, 50, 51. But how does affirming, *That*, to expect *God's Grace* from any *Hands* but his own, is to affront him, contradict the *Use* of *Prayers*,
and

and Impositions of the Bishops Hands, ordered by our Church; unless our Church had affirmed, that the Bishops, and not God, conferred Grace; or that He always conferred it, as they directed Him; or that they were infallibly directed by Him, when to confer it; none of which Claims, so injurious to Almighty God, or so visibly false, our Church ever arrogates to its self; which you should have proved it to have done, before you brought so foul an Accusation against it, or arraigned the Bishop, for contradicting its Orders.

But it's plain, you mistake the whole Matter of Confirmation; when you imagine it to be same Institution, with that *Laying on of the Hands* of the Apostles, by which the first Christians received the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost: or when you suppose Bishops now, to have the same Powers with the Apostles then. The *Laying on of the Apostles Hands*, and the *Receiving the Holy Ghost*, which visibly followed it, was Something so Singular to those Beginnings of Christianity, and so Unlike any thing that has appeared in the Church ever since, that it seems very unaccountable, to make this a Precedent, or Parallel to that *Laying on of the Bishops Hands*, which we now call Confirmation: For, first, it is certain, the Apostles reserved this
Action

Action wholly to themselves. When St. Paul sent *Timothy* to *Ephesus*, and *Titus* into *Crete*, with such Powers, as resemble *Those* which our *Bishops* now exercise, He gives them no *Commission* for *Conferring* the *Holy Ghost*; and the *Laying on of Hands*, which he is speaking of, when He charges *Timothy* to *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man*, relates wholly to *Ordination*, or the appointing *Elders* in the *Church*; as appears from the Reason He subjoyns for such Caution, *neither be Partaker of other Mens Sins*, (1 Tim. 5. 22.), i. e. Do not make your self the Occasion of the Mischiefs, that ill-chosen *Elders* will bring upon *Christianity*, by chusing Persons rashly to that Office.

2. The *Apostles* left no *Directions* to Any after them, to continue this *Laying on of Hands*, for *conferring* the *Holy Ghost*. And it is very unaccountable, if *That* was an *Action* to remain in the *Church*, for the *Ends* They used it for, that They should never, in any of their *Writings*, express the least *Intimation* of it, or at all recommend it to their *Successors*, as you call them.

3. Your *Passage* from the *Acts* proves no such Thing; nor do you indeed apply it to that Purpose; but to another, which I shall presently examine. Nor does the *Passage* to the *Hebrews*, (which you quote,
p. 6.)

p. 6.) prove it any better. For the plain Reason, for which the *Laying on of Hands* is there reckoned up among the *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, is, because those *Gifts*, which were conferred by the *Holy Ghost* on Those upon whom the Apostles laid their Hands, were the greatest Confirmation of the Truth of the Christian Religion, that could be given. And what these *Gifts* were, we see plainly throughout all the *Acts of the Apostles*; and particularly in the 19th Chapter, Ver. 6. where we are told, that when Saul had laid his Hands upon some, the *Holy Ghost* came on them, and they spake with Tongues, and Prophesied. Now, this being the *Visible and Constant Effect* of the *Laying on of the Apostles Hands*, and there having appeared no such *Visible Effect* since; it is not at all reasonable to conclude, that the Author of the *Hebrews*, intended any *Laying on of Hands*, that was to remain always in the Church, as *Baptism* was to do: considering that the *Main End* of it, and *Visible Effect* of it, was shortly to cease. To make this a *Foundation* for such a *Doctrine* is, at best, to argue very precariously, from One obscure Text to the greatest Concerns; and to build the greatest Powers and Privileges thereupon.

4. It cannot be, from the Nature of the Thing, that Any since the *Apostles* should have

have the Power *They* had, of conferring the *Holy Ghost*, by the *Imposition* of their *Hands*; unless *They* likewise have the same *Infallible Spirit*, by which *They* were conducted. For otherwise we must maintain this *Absurdity*, that God has entrusted his *Gifts* and *Graces* in the *Hands* of *Fallible Men*, who may often, and no doubt often will, misapply *them*. In this Case, He would really give his *Favours* out of his *own Hands*, to be dispensed as *Weak*, or sometimes *Wicked Men* should think fit; which He does not do, as long as He guides *Those*, whom He so entrusts, by His *Infallible Unerring Spirit*: for then He is still the *Dispenser* of *them* Himself; and *They* only the *Instruments* of His *Dispensation* in His *Hands*; which is allowed on all Sides to have been the Case of the *Apostles*; but which, I hope, no One amongst us has so left the *Principles* of *Protestantism*, and common *Modesty*, and *Sense*, as to affirm to be the Case at present. If any are Bold enough to affirm this; the same *Arguments* which we use against the corrupted *Church* of *Rome*, will serve for an Answer to all their *Pretences*; That the *Scripture* is our only *Rule* of *Faith*; and that nothing of this Sort is either expressed *there*, or can be concluded from *thence*.

5. The *Christians* indeed, very early, (how early is uncertain,) observed a certain Ceremony, in Imitation of the *Laying on of Hands* of the *Apostles*, which they called *Confirmation*, or *Sealing*; and which, they supposed, in proper Subjects, was followed with some *Gifts* of the *Holy Ghost*. This Practice does not appear to be founded upon any *Command* or *Direction*, in the *Scriptures* that we now have : Upon what *Authority* the *Ancients* grounded it, or when the Practice it self begun, is not easy to find out with any *Certainty*. But however that be ; They do not, as I know of, pretend to any *Certainty*, and *Assurance*, that the *Holy Spirit* always followed Their *Sealing* and *Anointing* : If any of Them do, we must remember always, that They are *Fallible Men* like our selves ; that Their *Opinions* are no *Rule* of *Faith* to *Christians*. But till it be proved that they do this, it is not Fair to cast so great a *Reproach* on them, as to accuse them of setting up their own *humane Benedictions*, as *Authoritative* and *Infalible*, which is the same thing ; or of *affronting* God so far, as to teach Men to expect *Grace* from Their *Hands*, and not from His alone. The *Passage* you quote from *Cyprian* (p. 6.), without telling us from what Part of him, but which is in his *Famous Letter* to *Jubianus*, Ep. 73. proves

proves no *Pretence* like this ; and is therefore nothing to your Purpose. He says, *They* (i. e. *They* who are Baptized) are brought to the *Presidents* of the Church, to the end that by (or through) our Prayer and Imposition of Hands, they may (not receive, but) obtain (consequantur) the *Holy Ghost*, and be Consummated with the *Lord's Seal*. Now what is there, in this Passage, which expresses more, than what his Lordship frequently and readily allows ; that such *Benedictions* are *Lawful*, and may be *Useful*, as are only *Expressions* of our hearty *Wishes*, or *Declarations* of the *Blessings* promised by the *Gospel* to such, as come up to the *Terms* of it ; and do not pretend to be *Authoritative*, or to make *Salvation* depend upon them. But I think my self obliged to speak freely on this Point ; and to own, that, could you have found any *Expressions* in *Cyprian*, never so much to your Purpose, I could never, as a *Christian*, have submitted to them, as to a *sufficient Authority*: First, not knowing that *He*, or any of his *Brethren*, the *Fathers*, had the *Infallibility* of the *Apostles* left to Them ; and besides, considering that *He* in particular lived about the *Middle* of the *Third Century*, when many *Novelties* had been already introduced amongst *Christians*, and more were daily introducing ;
and

and when *Christianity* it self had suffered a very considerable *Change*, from what it had *Originally* been.

6. The *Confirmation*, as it is practised in our *Church*, is different from that of the *Ancients*, as it is performed some *Years* after *Baptism*; whereas that of the *Ancients* immediately followed it. This *St. Cyprian* intimates in this very *Passage*, when he says, *They, who are Baptized (Baptizantur) in the Church, (not as you translate it, who have been Baptized,) are brought, &c. Amongst Us, Those who have been long before Baptized, are brought to the Bishop to be Confirmed.* The Reason of this *Difference* is, that till *Cyprian's Time* none but *Adult Persons* were *Baptized*; and even in his *Time* the *Practice* of *Baptizing Infants* was very rare: so that *Confirmation* then was only *Laying on of Hands*, and *Praying* for *Those*, who had already made their *Profession*, and taken on them the *Vows* of *Christians*, that *They* might obtain the *Holy Spirit*. With *Us* it is, making in our own *Persons* those *Professions*, and *Vows*, which *Others*, whilst we were yet *Infants*, had made for *Us*; and upon that *Laying on of Hands*, and *Praying*, that *Such* as were Formerly *Regenerate* by *Water*, and the *Holy Ghost*, might now be strengthened with the *Holy Ghost the Comforter*.

7. But

7. But in *Our Church*, no more than in the *Ancient*, is any thing more pretended to, than, what the Bishop readily allows; *Heavy Prayers*, and *Wishes*, and *Declarations of God's Blessings* on Those, to whom *He* has promised them, pronounced by the Bishop in the Name of the *whole Church*; together with the *Outward Form of Laying on of Hands*. And it is the greatest *Injury*, and *Affront* to *Our Church*, to accuse it of arrogating any farther Powers, than *These*; or of assuming *Authoritatively* and *Infallibly* to confer the *Holy Spirit*, and making themselves thereby equal to the *Apostles*, immediately and solely *Commissioned* by our Lord so to do. To justify therefore *our Church* from so grievous an *Imputation*; * when it empowers the Bishop, to certify those on whom he has laid his Hands (by that Sign) of God's Favour, and gracious Goodness to them, we must so understand it, as only empowering Him, to certify and assure them of God's Favour, providing They observe the Vows They have taken, and come up to those Terms on which alone *He* has promised it; and thereupon to make *humble Supplications* to his *Divine Majesty*, to let his *Fatherly Hand*

* The Office of Confirmation.

be ever over them, and his Holy Spirit be ever with them; and not as giving him Authority to distribute God's Graces, and the Holy Spirit, as he pleases. If this were not the Meaning, and Intention of our Church, the humble Supplication to Almighty God, for what had been already certified, and would infallibly be dispensed, to the Persons so confirmed, would seem, not only very needless, but wholly inconsistent, and would be only Trifling with Almighty God.

8. Confirmation, as it is practised, and understood in Our Church, tho' it is not founded on any express Command, or Direction in Scripture, is an excellent Institution; as lawful, as any Prayers for Others, or Declarations of what God has himself laid declared: whilst our Salvation is not made to depend upon what Men declare to be God's Will, but upon what is really and truly his Will; and whilst the Want of what is in the Power of Men to withhold, or the Application of what They may wrongfully apply, is not made to determine the Favour and gracious Goodness of God. And this Institution is the more necessary amongst Us of this Church, where Infants are baptized; because it reminds them of what they are already obliged by; and requires them to own, and take upon them-

themselves *in Person*, those *Vows* and *Promises*, which otherwise they might perhaps not think themselves *obliged* to perform.

Having thus considered the *Case* of *Confirmation*, as practised by *Christians* since the *Apostles Days*, and particularly as now practised in *This Church of England*, and having shewn you, I hope, how little it serves your *purpose* of maintaining *Authoritative Benedictions*; and how great a *Reproach* you would cast on *Christians*, and on *this Church* particularly, by such a *Representation* of it, as you have made. I shall next, as I promised you before, consider the *Use* you make of the *Passage* in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, (viii. 14.), quoted by you (p. 2.)

You conclude from thence, four *several Things*, which you are so positive in that you affirm they are *out of Question*, but of which, I shall plainly show you but *one* is so much as *True*.

The *first Conclusion* you make is, that something else, *EVEN* in the *Apostolic Times*, was necessary, besides *Baptism*, in order to qualify *Persons* to become complete *Members of the Body*, or *Partakers of the Grace, of Christ*. Now this does not at all follow; for the *Holy Ghost* was not, *EVEN* then, given to *Persons* to make them *Complete Members*.

Pro- Members of Christ's Body : (Baptism did
 per- that, and was therefore the *sole Ordinance*,
 per- which Christ himself prescribed to the
 of Con- Apostles, as a full *Sign* of Profession, and
 since of Admission into the Number of his Di-
 ly as sciples :) but was given to them, after they
 gland were his *Members*, and *Disciples*, to strenght-
 w lit en them under their *Difficulties* from the
 aining their *Hopes*, and his *Promises*. They
 great were, by *Baptism*, *Partakers of the Grace*
 istians of Christ ; their *Sins* were pardoned upon
 such t ; they had the *Promise of Everlasting*
 made Happiness in the *World to come*, and of
 before the *Holy Spirit's Assistance* in this, provid-
 Passag ing they came up to the *Terms* which the
 , que Gospel required. The *Assistance* of the *Holy*
 Spirit was indeed a farther *Grace*, or *Fa-*
 r swee our, which Christ had promised to his
 ive in Disciples, i. e. to those who were already
 ession Christians, and *Members of his Body* ; and
 r you which therefore they had a *Right* to hope
 or, if they complied with the *Terms* of
 s, the their *Baptism*. The *Gifts* of the *Holy*
 stolic Spirit were greater, and more miraculous
 ism, at first ; and the *Effects* of them, were
 mple speaking with *Tongues*, and *Propheying*,
 of the Acts xix. 6.) : But when the *Necessity* of
 t at a miracles, for the first Settling of Christia-
 EVER ity in the *World*, ceased ; the *Gifts* of
 mple the Spirit were more imperceptible, and
 lembere

such only, as the *Wants* and *Difficulties* of *Christians* required: And these *sort* of *Gifts*, or this *Assistance* of the *Spirit*, where it was needful, was to last to the *End* of the *World*; but always to remain in the *Hands* of *God* himself, and of *Christ*, as his *Vicegerent*, to dispense. Thus it appears, the *Receiving* the *Holy Spirit* was not *Requisite* to make a *Man* a *Member* of *Christ*, or a *Christian*; but only to enable those who were already so, to perform their *Duty* aright, and to wade through all the *Trials*, and *Difficulties*, that the *Devil*, or the *World*, or *Wicked Men* continually cast before them.

2dly. That *God's Graces* are conferred by *Means* of humane *Hands*, is so far from being out of *Question*, or following from the *Apostles*, and not others, conferring the *Holy Ghost*; that, this *Power* being only lodged with them, is an *Argument* to the contrary. For, as *They* were the proper *Messengers* of *Christ*, entrusted by him to preach his *Doctrine* to the *World*, and upon that Account were under the immediate *Direction* of the *Infallible Spirit* of *God*, which *Christ* had promised to send them, to lead them into all *Truth*: so, the *Power* of conferring the *Holy Ghost* being confined to *Them*, shows evidently that *God* designed to intrust his *Graces* with

None

None, but *such* as were under his *Immediate Direction*, and were *Infallibly* conducted by his *Spirit*. And in this Case, *such Hands*, are not *humane Hands*, in the Bishop's Sense, but *Divine Hands*; i. e. God still dispenses His *Graces* Himself; and tho' He makes use of *Infallible Men*, as *Instruments*, yet keeps *Them* in His own *Hands*; as much as if He immediately dispensed *Them* Himself, without any such *Intervention*. Could any *Men* upon Earth, prove *Themselves* to be *Infallible*, as the *Apostles* were; *They* would prove thus much, that *They* are *Capable* of being made *Instruments*, in the *Hand* of God, of Distributing His *Graces*; tho' it would require farther *Evidence* to prove, that *They* actually were so. But without this *Infallibility*, *Men* are absolutely *Incapable* of such a *Trust*; and God cannot be suppos'd to leave His *Graces* to the *Disposal* of such truly *humane Hands*, without affronting His *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, by supposing, that *He* has put the *Salvation* of *Many*, upon the *Wisdom* or *Goodness* of a Few *Frail Men*; and subjected it to the *Follies*, or *Passions*, or *Vices*, to which *They* are liable.

Your *Third Remark*, That *this Office* was *strictly appropriated* to the *Apostles*, is so very *True*, that, not only no *Inspired Men* of that Time partook of *It*; but *None*

after *Them*, not even the *Chief Governors of the Church*, succeeded *Them* in it; or had this *Power*, or *Office* delegated to *Them*. For, tho' we read that sometimes the *Holy Ghost* fell on *Persons*, without the *Laying on of the Apostles Hands*, and even before *Baptism*, as in the *Case of Cornelius*, (*Acts x.*); yet we never read that *It* fell on *Any*, thro' the *Laying on of Hands* of *Others*, than the *Apostles*; or that *Any Others* were appointed to succeed *Them*, in the *Power of Conferring the Holy Ghost*, by that *Form*. As to the *Confirmation of the Antient Church*, and of our *Church of England*: I have shewn you before, that, tho' *It* was in *Imitation*, and after the *Example* of the *Apostles*, yet *It* was not in *Consequence* of the *same Power*, or in the *Exercise* of the *same Office*; but was only the *Prayer*, and *Conditional Declaration* of the *Church*.

Your *Fourth Conclusion*, *That the Power of the Apostles, for the Performance of this Ordinance, was entirely owing to their Superior Degree in the Ministry; and not to any Extraordinary Gifts they were endow'd with;* is very surprising: when *St. Peter* expressly calls this very *Power*, *The Gift of God*, in Answer to *Simon*, who would have purchased *It* with *Money*, (*Acts viii. 20.*); and when it was *Itself*, the most *Extraordina-*

ry of all the *Gifts* of the *Holy Spirit*. It
 was indeed owing to their *Superior Degree*
 in the *Ministry*, (and such a Degree as
 None have been placed in since *Their*
Time;) that *They* had such *Extraordinary*
Gifts bestow'd upon *Them*; because *They*
 were the *Apostles* of *Christ*, and were to
 preach His *Gospel* to all *Nations*; and be-
 cause this *Miraculous*, and *Useful Power*,
 was the greatest *Means* of *Propagating* it
 over the *World*; as it enabled *Them* to
 confer on *Others*, such *Powers*, to *speak*
 with *Tongues*, to *Prophecy*, and to *work*
Wonders, as were of great *Advantage* to
Christianity, in its *Beginning*, and were
 convincing *Arguments* in its *Favour*. This
Gift of *God*, belong'd only to the *Apostles*;
 and therefore *Philip*, who was not an *Apo-*
stle, was wanting in *this Gift*, tho' He
 had *Others*; and could not perform *This*
Miracle, tho' He was an *Evangelist*, and a
Worker of other *Miracles*. But, if you wou'd
 conclude from hence, that All who have
 been in the *Superior Degree* of the *Mini-*
stry, since the *Apostles Time*, have these
 same *Powers*; you would argue very In-
 consequentially: That, because the *Apo-*
stles, who were in the *Superior Degree* of
 the *Ministry*, in the *Beginning* of *Christia-*
nity, had this *Extraordinary Power*, when
 it was necessary for the *Spreading* that *Re-*

ligion over the *World*, and when They were fully endow'd with such other *Gifts*, as were necessary to the Exercise of this *Power*, as *Infallibility*, and the *Discerning of Spirits*; therefore, Those, who are in the *Superior Degree of the Ministry*, which is now existent, and which is totally different from That of the *Apostles*, and vastly *Inferior* to It, who are endowed with no such necessary *Gifts*, and when this *Extraordinary Power*, is not any longer necessary to *Christianity*, must have the same *Powers* that the *Apostles* had; because They were Both in the *Superior Degree of the Respective Ministries* of their Time.

By these Considerations, I hope, you are satisfy'd, that there was no Need of such *Exclamations* as you run out into against the Bishop; and that, tho' St. Peter, and St. John, might Confer the Holy Ghost, by the Imposition of their Hands, without Affronting God, yet Others since Them, could not assume the same *Power*, or *Office*, without Affronting Him; and likewise that the Dispensation of God's Grace was still left in His own Hand alone, notwithstanding that He thought fit to make use of the *Apostles* as Instruments of dispensing it; and that the *Apostles* were neither Wicked nor Vain, in submitting to be made use of, and directed by God, for that Purpose,

pose,

pose. Thus the Unfair and almost Blasphemous Comment, you would fix on His Lordship's Words, (p. 4. and 5.) falls to the Ground, together with the Pretty Speech that you put in His Mouth, to Those who come to be Confirmed by Him. But if Confirmation be Absurd on the Bishop's Notion; you must put that same Speech, not in his Mouth alone, but in the Mouths of All the Bishops, and in the Mouth of this Church of England, it self: Or else you must cast upon It, and Them, the Foul Calumny of Usurping the Infallibility, and Power of the Apostles of our Lord; or, which is more Absurd, of assuming their Power, without asserting their Infallibility. But, I hope, the Confirmation of our Church, can be defended, without such Stretches; or else, I will venture to say, It ought not to be defended.

II. The next thing you instance in, is Ordination, (p. 7.) And here you misrepresent both the Bishop, the Church, and the Apostles. But the same Answer is to be made here, that was made to your Mistakes on the former Head of Confirmation. For, first, you misrepresent the Apostles, when you represent them as Unassisted, and Fallible Men, in the Point of conferring the Holy Ghost; as you do, (p. 7.) When you call the being consecrated by the Lay-

Laying on of their Hands, the being consecrated by Humane Hands : whereas, they being infallibly guided by the Spirit of God in these Matters, whatever they did of that kind, they did as Instruments in the Hands of God ; and, tho' God dispensed his Graces through their Hands, yet he kept them in his own ; they were still to be expected from Him, and not from Them ; they were still His Graces, and not Theirs. But if these Graces are entrusted to Fallible Men, they are no longer the Graces of God, but properly and strictly the Graces of those Men, that grant them as they please. If therefore, you can find that any of the Fallible Fathers or Councils, in the Primitive Church, asserted these Powers ; (which, for their sakes only I hope you cannot ;) it will prove no more than this alternative, that they were either, notwithstanding all their Sincerity and Sufferings, very weak and mistaken Men ; or else Blasphemous Usurpers of Power never entrusted with them by God. But the Truth, I believe, is, They meant no more (however uncandidly They may have at any time expressed themselves,) by Laying on of Hands and Blessing in God's Name than Hearty Prayers, or Conditional Declarations. They had certainly no Authority to do, or to mean any more.

How

However you may find it taught by the
 Scriptures, (p. 7.), that the Gifts and Graces
 of the Holy Spirit are requisite, to qualify
 and enable the Clergy, to exercise their Fun-
 ctions to the Benefit of the Church; yet it
 does not thence follow, that any Men are
 to be entrusted with the Power of con-
 ferring those Gifts and Graces. God knows
 best whom to give them to; and if he in-
 fallibly directs any Persons, as he did the
 Apostles, he may through their Hands,
 bestow them, and he still bestows them
 himself. This answers the two Passages
 you quote, one from Acts xx. 28. (I sup-
 pose it's wrong printed, Ephes. iv. 7.) and
 the other from 2 Tim. i. 6. The first
 only relates either to some extraordinary Me-
 thod of appointing Elders in the Church,
 as we find (Acts xiii. 2.), The Holy Ghost
 said, Separate me Saul and Barnabas for
 the Work whereunto I have called them;
 or else, when St. Paul said to the Elders of
 Ephesus, (Acts xx. 28.) that the Holy Ghost
 had made them Overseers of the Flock, he
 meant no more, than that He, or some other
 Laying Person, infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost,
 had appointed them to that Office; which
 was the same thing, as if they had been
 immediately called to it by the Holy Ghost
 himself; and does not prove that They
 were appointed by humane Hands at all.

How

The

The Second Passage, (p. 8.) where St. Paul puts Timothy in Mind, to stir up the Gift of God, that was in him, by Laying on of his Hands; is no more to your Purpose of proving that God's Graces are conferred by humane Hands, than the Former. For first the Gift of God, was given by His Hands, by the Hands of an Apostle, under the Infallible Guidance of the Spirit of God, and so not by humane Hands. But then this Passage is explain'd, beyond Doubt by another in his 1 Epistle to Timothy (iv. 14.), where He mentions the same Gift, as given him by Prophecy, with the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, i. e. his Hands, together with those of the Presbytery, who were present, according to the Practice of those Times. It is evident that St. Paul lays the Stress upon the Prophecy, by which He was appointed, by the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of Prophecy, to that Office, or Work, to which That Gift was requisite. But neither of these Texts, imply any thing to have been Effected by Fallible and humane Hands.

You, in the next Place, misrepresent the Church of England, when you represent It as claiming such Powers. This you would support (p. 9.) by the Form of Ordination of Priests used in It. The Bishops

is therein directed to Lay his Hands on the
 Person's Head, and to say, Receive the Ho-
 ly Ghost, for the Office and Work of a Priest,
 &c. From this Form, you say, (p. 9.) it s
 plain, that our Church holds, that the Re-
 ception of the Holy Ghost, is necessary to con-
 stitute a Person a Christian Priest. I an-
 swer, Our Church holds no such Thing,
 but only that the Assistance of the Holy
 Ghost, is necessary to enable a Person to
 execute well the Office, and Work of a Priest
 in the Church of God, committed to Him,
 by the Imposition of the Bishops, and Pres-
 byters Hands. If It held, what you af-
 firm It holds; the Consequence would be,
 that no One in the World could tell, who
 was a True Christian Priest or Presbyter,
 and who not; as no One can judge, who
 receives the Holy Ghost, and who does not.
 To the Second and Third Inference you
 draw hence, That the Holy Ghost, is con-
 ferred thro' humane Hands, and by the
 Hands of a Bishop; I answer, First, that
 you have quoted the Words, not point-
 ed as they are in the Form of Conse-
 cration and Ordination, of our Church:
 but so as to make it appear, as if
 the Bishop Himself pretended to con-
 fer the Holy Ghost, by the Imposition of
 Hands; And by dividing with a Comma,
 Committed unto Thee, by the Imposition of
 our

our Hands, which is not divided in *Our* in-
Form, you would lead us into this Mi-
 stake, that *by the Imposition of our Hands*,
 related not to the *Commission* They give
 Him, which it plainly does, but to, *Re-*
ceive the Holy Ghost; that so People may
 be led to think that the *Bishops* confer *It*.
 I answer, *Secondly*; The *Bishops* who use
 it, not being, nor pretending to be, *Infal-*
libile, as the *Apostles* were, and conse-
 quently not knowing *who are worthy to*
receive the Holy Ghost, and *who are not*;
the Form, must be so understood, as
 to comprehend in it, no such *Pretence*, as
 a *Power of conferring Certainly the Holy*
Ghost: but is to be understood only, as a
Heartly Prayer to Almighty God, for the
Person Ordained; and a *Declaration*, that
 God has promis'd his *Holy Spirit* to those
that ask It; to support them under, and
 carry them thro' all *Difficulties*, which
 they may meet with in the *Performance* of
 their *Duty*; and especially of a *Duty*, that
 would be most *Beneficial* to *Mankind*, if
 rightly and faithfully performed; but if
 not, will be the *Reverse*, and be most *De-*
structive and Hurtful to *Them*. If you
 will have it, that the *Church* takes that
Form in the *Authoritative Sense*, you force
 the *Church*, into this *Streight*; either to
 claim *Infallibility*, that so *They* may cer-
 tainly

Our only know whom to confer the Holy Ghost upon; or to confer it at Random, and make the Holy Ghost subject to their mistakes and Frailties. The Bishops, as they cannot see the Hearts of Men, must be often in Danger of Conferring the Holy Ghost on the Wickedest of Men, who desire to be in the Ministry for no other End, than to gain Wealth, and Dominion, and to insult, and tyrannize over the Understandings, and Consciences of Mankind. The Bishops of our Church, I am perswaded, have Christianity too much at Heart, and the Honour of God, and of the Holy Spirit, to wish for such a Power; and too great a Regard, to our Blessed Saviour, to Usurp an Authority, as descending to them from Him, which He never intended to leave Them. If this were the Doctrine of the Church of England, (as you might represent it, but as I am perswaded it is not,) it would indeed be evident that it is most Corrupt; more Corrupt, than even Popery it self is, which scarce pretends to this Enormous Claim, tho' in other Matters it claims Infallibility. If Our Church you had really (as it has not,) established such an Iniquity, as This, by a Law, it could not, and should not be defended. But God to be thanked, it has not, and that this is a gross Calumny cast upon it, by its Greatly, and only Hurtful Enemies. When

When you have thus misrepresented the *Apostles*, and the *Church*, you go on to bestow the *same Usage* on the *Bishop*, (p. 9, 10, 11.). You wonder, how, on his Principles, he could either receive *Consecration*, or use *Ordination*, as it stands in the *Church*. He plainly tells you, in *Justification* of Himself, that he expected the *Graces* of *God* only from his own *Hands* and not from *Men's*; and that he never pretends to have a *Power* lodged with him to dispose of *Them*, as he shall think fitting; that he did not understand his *Commission*, to be of that Nature: and yet he very justly accepted of the hearty *Prayers* of *Those* who consecrated him; and did not think himself obliged to reject the *Declaration*, they made to him of the *Assistance* of *God's Spirit*, conformable to the *Promises*, and *Declarations* of the *Gospel*; nor does he refuse to do the *same* for *Any* others, for whom his *Office* requires him to do it. He only disclaims all such *Pretextes*, as are *Inconsistent* with the *Gospel*, and even with the *Wisdom*, and *Goodness* of the *God*; as would *Dishonour* *God*, and expose *Religion*. And therefore, very ridiculously you ask his Lordship, (p. 10.) *Whether he would have been Consecrated to the Office of a Bishop by these Words, Take thou Power to sustain all things in Being given Thee by Spi-*

My Hands; when it is *Unlawful*, and even
Impious, to Pray that *Such a Power* may
 be bestowed on *Any One*; and when there
 are no *Declarations*, or *Promises* in the Go-
 spel, of giving such a *Power* to *Men*; but,
 on the contrary, when this *Power* is there-
 in expressly granted, and confined to our
 great Lord and Master, alone: whereas
 the *Holy Ghost* may very *Lawfully* be Pray-
 ed for, and be declared to be *Promised* to
Christians, to assist them in the Perform-
 ance of their *Duty*; because *Christ Him-*
self has promised it, and declared that
 it shall be granted to *those that ask it*.
 You are as *Unreasonable*, when you won-
 der (p. 11.) how his *Lordship* would ac-
 cept of a *Character*, which obliged Him to
Confirm, and *Ordain*; because He declares,
 He pretends to no *Power* of *Conferring* the
Holy Ghost, and warns People to expect
 it not from *his Hands*, but from *God a-*
lone. That is, because He will not *Usurp*
 this *Power*, therefore He cannot lawfully
 and sincerely Pray, that the *Assistance* of
 the *Holy Spirit* may be granted to Those
 whom He *Confirms*, or *Ordains*; or de-
 clare to Them out of the *Gospel*, what *Christ*
 Himself therein declares. He does not pre-
 tend, when He *Confirms* and *Ordains* any,
 to assure them in *God's Name*, of the *Holy*
Spirit, but on certain *Conditions*, which

D

God

God requires: and if on *those Conditions*, and his *Prayers*, They receive the *Graces* of God, They receive them from God, and not from *Him*; the Receiving these *Graces* depends on the *Disposition* of the *Persons*, and on the *Will* of God, and not on the *Words* which the Bishop pronounces, or on any *Outward Action*, which He performs. Making this *Parallel*, to his being made a *Bishop in the Virgin Mary's Name*, and recognizing her Power, after He had been preaching to the *Layity* against it, is very absurd; for this would be both *Unlawful*, and *Sinful* in its self, and inconsistent with his own *Doctrine*: Whereas what now He professes to do in *Confirmation*, and *Ordination*, is both *Lawful* in its self, and is the *plain*, and *Only Intention* of the *Offices* which he Uses, and what He never *Preached to the Laity* against. If He had indeed maintained what you would have Him maintain, the *Parallel* would be so far just; that He would do a very *Unlawful Action* in *Confirming*, and *Ordaining*, and set up a very *Enormous Pretence*, and very derogating to the Honour of God, and of *Christ* our *Saviour*.

By this Time the World may judge Who it is, the Bishop, or You, that condemns at once, by your *Doctrines*, the *Scriptures*, the *Apostles*, their martyr'd Successors

For, the Church of England, as well as his
 Lordship's own Conduct. Only I shall not,
 so far divest my self of my Christianity,
 as to insinuate any such Suspensions against
 you, as you have endeavour'd very un-
 justly, and very unfairly, to raise against
 his Lordship.

I should now pass to your third Instance,
 of the Consecration of the Lord's Supper ;
 but before I leave this Head, I shall make
 some few Observations on the Significa-
 tion, and Original, of the Form of Lay-
 ing on of Hands ; which will, I believe,
 give no small Light to this whole Matter.

1. It is certain, that *Laying on of Hands*,
 was an Ancient Custom among the Jews, as
 we find even as Jacob the Patriarch : and was
 always understood, amongst them, as a
 designation of the Persons, for whom He,
 who laid his Hands on Them, solemnly
 pray'd to Almighty God ; and not as any
 authoritative Declaration of what should
 happen to them. This is evident, from
 the Difference that appears, between Ja-
 cob's laying his Hands on Joseph's Chil-
 dren Gen. xlviii. 15, 16., and the Prophe-
 tical Blessing which He gives to all his
 children together, in the xlixth Chapter.
 In the former the whole is transacted in
 the Form of Praying : in the latter, there
 is no Imposition of Hands, no Prayers, but

mere *Prophetical*, and *Authoritative* *Declarations* reveled to Him by the *Spirit of God*. It's plain, that *Naaman the Syrian*, who came to be cured of his *Leprosy* by *Elijah the Prophet*, understood the *Laying on of Hands* in this Sense too; for (*2 Kings v. 11.*) He joins it with *Prayer*. *He will surely come out to me*, says he, *and stand, and call on the Name of his God, and stroke his Hand over the Place, and recover the Leper*. This being the settled *Notion* of the *Jews* about that Matter, (as *Gregorius* observes,) *Jairus*, (*Mat. ix. 18.*) who had not a high enough *Opinion* of *Christ's* *Power*, but thought it like that of a *common Prophet*, desired Him to come and lay his Hand upon his Daughter, that she might live; not imagining that *Christ* could heal by a *Word* at the greatest Distance, but that it was necessary He should come, after the manner of other *Prophets*, and pray over Her, *Laying his Hands on Her*, that so He may obtain her Life from *God*. That this was the *Notion* of that Time is further evident from *Matth. xix. 13.* where we are told, that there were brought unto *Jesus*, *little Children*, that he should put his Hands on them, and pray. And, tho' *St. Matthew* only mentions his *laying his Hands* on them, *St. Mark* adds, that He at the same time, *blessed them*, (*x. 16.*) i.e. pray

Devoted for them; which *Gratius* shews to be
 the Sense, in which the Jews always un-
 derstood *Blessing*; and which He farther
 proves, by showing that *עֲלֵינוּ* is always
 used by the LXX either for *Offering up*
 Prayers, or for *giving of Thanks*; and that
 in this Place it must signify the former,
 the latter bearing no Sense here.

2. As this Ceremony was a *Visible Action*,
 betokening Prayer for the Person on whom
 Hands were laid; and as this was a known
 and very common Custom in *Judæa*, (where
 They dedicated all the Officers of their Syn-
 agogues, and indeed almost All whom
 They designed to employ in any Service,
 and even Those Youths whom they had
 the best Hopes of, to Almighty God, by
 laying on of Hands, and Prayer over
 them,) So our Blessed Saviour himself, tho'
 He had Power given Him to bestow the
 Graces, and Gifts of God without any such
 formality, yet generally thought fit to
 make use of it, as a Declaration, that,
 whatever He did, He did by the Power
 He had received of His Father; that those
 Gifts, and Graces, tho' He dispensed them,
 came Originally from the Father; that
 therefore the Acknowledgments, and Thank-
 ings for them, were to redound Ulti-
 mately to the Father's Glory, and were to
 be addressed to Him, as their Proper, and

Final Object ; and likewise, to teach his *Disciples*, that whatever *Powers* He should leave *Them*, for bestowing the same *Graces*, *They* were always to remember, that *These Powers* came from his *Father*, and were to be always sought from *Him*, in His *Name*. A singular *Instance* of this *Conduct* in our *Saviour*, we find, (*Luke* *xxii* *50.*) just before He ascended to his *Father* ; even after He was declared the *Son of God with Power*, by the *Resurrection from the dead*, and after He had received *Power in Heaven, and Earth*, from the *Father* : After all this, I say, He, as He was *Ascending* to his *Father*, *lifts up his Hands and blesses them*, i. e. his *Disciples* ; yet still keeps up the *Form* of asking a *Blessing* upon them from his *Father*, and would not do it in an *Authoritative manner*, though He then had all *Authority*, and might justly have done it, as of *Himself*. Our *Saviour* seems by this, and all his other *Practise* in This matter, to have laid in *Defense* against those of his *Followers*, who should be so *Assuming*, as to claim *Authority*, which He himself, (tho' He had it so, as no *Person* before or since ever had,) yet would not put in *Practice*.

3. *Christ* left in *Charge* with his *Apostles* such *Powers*, as were necessary for the *spreading* his *Religion* over the *World*.

The

These were the *Powers of working Miracles*, and of *Conferring the same Power* on others. They frequently executed this their *Commission*; but always in the *Form of Prayer*, and *going to God*, joined with the *Imposition of Hands*, and in the *Name of Christ*, as have shown in several Instances before. They never pretended to give any *Gift*, as from *Themselves*; but always ascribe *Them* of *God*. Their *Prayers* were indeed always heard; and whomsoever They prayed for, they received immediately the *Gifts*, which They asked for them. But then They were guided by an *Infalible Spirit*; and had *Discernment of Spirits* from *It*: They knew, that *Those* on whom They laid their *Hands*, Praying that They might receive the *Holy Ghost*, were proper *Subjects* for such a *Grace*: and therefore it was, that They were always heard. Their *Case* was the same with that of *Moses*, and the *Old Prophets*, who having the *Prophetick Spirit*, knew whom to pray for, and whom to *bless* in *God's Name*. But as *Moses* and the *Prophets* had done before, so They now kept strictly to the *Form of Praying* for those *Gifts* and *Graces*, (of which *Laying on of Hands* was only the *Outward Sign*), to show, that those *Gifts*, and *Graces* came not from *Them*, but from *God* alone; and to prevent

vent so dangerous a *Mistake*, as the *Contrary Supposition* would be.

4. But their *Commission* ending with Them, and no *One* like *It*, being left with *Christians* after Them: All *Imposition of Hands*, however *Lawful*, as all *Prayer* and *Supplication* for others is *Lawful*; or how ever *Useful*, and *Effectual* it may be, thro the *Goodness* and *Mercy* of *God*; yet cannot be of the same *Force*, which *Theirs* was, not being so certainly *Effectual*; but being so, or not, according to the *Disposition* of the *Persons*, on whom it is used. All *Laying on of Hands*, therefore, since the *Apostles* Time, is but *Prayer*, and *Prayer* that is not constantly and certainly heard; but only as the *Person* for whom it is offered is up, is ill, or well disposed; and as *God* is in his *Wisdom*, which He has not given to *These Men*, as He did to the *Apostles*, shall be seen fitting. Here therefore lies the Difference between the *Laying on of Hands*, by the *Apostles*, and that by *Others* since Them; that, tho' neither of them were, strictly speaking, *Authoritative*, but were only in the Nature of *Prayer*, and asking *Grace* from *God*, in *Christ's Name*: yet that of the *Apostles* was always *Effectual*, It being in Pursuance of *Christ's* direct *Promises* to Them, and They being guided by that *Spirit*, which suffered them not to Err

That of Others since Them, who have
 that Promise, and yet less that *Unerring*
 with *Spirit*, and being liable to *Err*, is only a
 with *Heartly Prayer* in their own Name, and
 on of the Church of God, that He would
 and purchase to grant his *Holy Spirit* to such
 how persons, as They lay their Hands upon, if
 thro' seems Good in his Eyes; and is not
 anno constantly and certainly heard; but is heard,
 was not, as the Person, on whom They Lay
 being their Hands, is *Worthy* of such a Grace, or
 ion of it. I have been the longer on this Mat-
 Layer; because I cannot help thinking it a
 Apo great Indignity to God, to suppose Him to
 that have left such *Vast Powers* in the Hands of
 ; but frail and Fallible Men; to squander away, or
 offer restrain his Gifts and Graces, according to
 God in their own uncertain Humours and Passions.
 ven to III. I proceed now to your last Instance,
 that the Consecration of the Lord's Supper; which
 Disse you accuse his Lordship's Doctrine of ha-
 ts, being exposed as a Trifle, as much as the
 Them ber Institutions; which I have just shewn
 strictly you, he has not at all exposed. I own,
 nly in St. Paul, that the Cup of Blessing
 Grace which we bless, is the Communion of the
 hat of blood of Christ. But it is nothing to the
 It be purpose here, that it is so. For, 1. Bles-
 promising is only *Praying*, or *Giving of Thanks*;
 y that is, it is either *Praying* for the Graces,
 Err and Favours of God, thro' Christ, whose
 but Death

Death we then *Commemorate*, that we may
 have *All the Benefits of his Death, and Pa-*
sion; or *Giving* unto God, *Hearty Thanks*
 for sending us his *Son*, and for all the
Mercies and Favours, which he has vouch-
 safed to give us in *Him*, at the Time that
 we are *Breaking Bread, and Drinking Wine*
 in *Remembrance of Him*. The *Latter*, that
 of *Giving Thanks*, is the *Sense* in which
 seems to be taken in the *Gospel*: For
εὐχαριστίας is the Word used for the *Cup*
 (which you have thought fit particular
 to instance in) both in the *Three Gospels*
 that mention the *Supper*, and in the *Epis-*
tle to the *Corinthians*; and in *St. Luke*
 and the *Corinthians*, for the *Bread* too.
St. Matthew is read differently indeed
 to the *Bread*; but the *Alexandrian* Ma-
 nuscript reads it there *εὐχαριστίας*, or *Giving*
Thanks, as well as *It* and all others read
 it so for the *Cup*. In *Our Church*, what
 called the *Prayer of Consecration*, is a *Mix-*
ture of Both, *Thanksgiving* and *Prayer*.
 For after having commemorated the *Good-*
ness, and Tender Mercy of God in Christ
 We (not the Priest alone, but the whole
Congregation with Him) pray, that *God*
 would *Hear us*, and grant that we receiv-
 ing, &c. may be *Partakers of his* (*Christ's*
most Blessed Body and Blood. Where are an-
humane and Authoritative Benedictions here
 An

and consequently, how can they be all
 d *Prayed?*

bankably, The Effect of this Prayer, is not
 ll the CONVERTING the Bread, and Wine into
 ouch Means of Grace, by a humane Benediction.
 e the CONVERTING is a Term I can never
 Wier, without fearing that by Degrees the
 r, that Doctrine of Transubstantiation, is to be
 nish, fallen in upon us again; yet you seem
 : For be particularly fond of it. But there is
 e Can such Conversion wrought by the Prayer
 ular Consecration: Nor are there any Means
 ospe Grace there, but the Disposition of the
 e Ep hearts, wrought by the Remembrance of
 Luke Greatest Mercies, and by Hopes of
 l too Greatest Promises; the Sincere Grati-
 eed tude, not only with our Lips, but in our
 e Moves; and the Heartiest and most Earnest
 Giving ayers, for God's Assistance in our Wants,
 s read for his other Blessings. I know of no
 hat other Effects of that Institution, but These;
 Mix you do, I should be glad to be taught
 Prayer You, what They are.

Goodly, But even in this Sense of Blessing,
 Chris does not yet appear to me, from this
 whose Message of St. Paul, or from any other Pas-
 at. Go thro' the Whole New Testament, that
 rece Particular Persons were appointed for
 nrist's Office: tho' it seems Decent, and for
 re an der's sake, that Those, who are appoint-
 here by the Church to pronounce the Prayers
 An in

in *their* Name, should perform *It*; but upon the *Notion* of any singular *Authoritative Benediction*; that *They* alone have *Privilege* of adding to *It*. And therefore what you say, (*p. 13.*) is a very ridiculous *Sophism*: That if the Bishop says, any may bless the Cup, then, tho' He *Contradicts* the *Benedictions* of the *Clergy*, He allows them by every *Body* else; or, If every *Body* cannot bless *It*, then, He must confess that the *Benedictions* of some *Persons* are *fectual*, where others are not. The explaining of which *Sophism*, will sufficiently *pose* *It*. The *Sense*, (if it be *Sense*) If the Bishop says, any *One* may bless *Cup*, (*Clergy* as well as *Laity*, tho' he thinks it most *Orderly* and *Decent*, that *Clergy* should do it,) then, tho' He *Contradicts* the *Benedictions* of the *Clergy*, (where yet you own He allows to bless as well the *Laity*,) He allows them by every *Body* else: the *English* of which is, He *Contradicts* the *Benedictions* of the *Clergy*, and allows only *Those* of the *Laity*, because he allows them *Both*, and of the *Two*, rather prefers those of the *Clergy*, for *Order's* sake. The next *Branch* of the *Dilemma*, is not less *Pleasant*. If every *Body* cannot bless (Here observe, *Blessing* is taken for an *Authoritative Benediction*, *Converting* the *Cup* into a *Mean* of *Grace*, which the Bishop

ever allows, and St. Paul is far from affirming; and then the *Argumentation* will be this:} If every Body cannot bless It, the Cup,) i. e. Convert It into a Mean of Grace, which the Bishop never allows that any One can do; then, (now comes the demonstration,) you must confess, (tho' you expressly deny,) that the *Benedictive* (in the fore-mentioned Sense, of *Auriferous Benedictions*,) of some Persons, is Effectual, where others are not; (even when you affirm them Both to be Equally effectual in this Sense,): Such Reasoning is very fit, to support such a Cause!

AFTER You have thus failed in your three Instances against his Lordship's Doctrine, you return to your *Exclamations*; where indeed you may have better Success, as it may move a *Multitude*, who either feel the *Strength of Good Reasoning*, or see the *Weakness, and Fallacy of Yours*. When you cannot *Triumph* over the Bishop by *Argument*, you endeavour to render him *Odious*, and so to gain the *Victory*, by *Reflection and Abuse*. You open (p. 13.) with Accusing his Lordship of coming near to the Sin against the Holy Ghost. It has unhappily been a Practice so common among *Divines*, to call every Offence against *Themselves*, and their Sway, Sin against the Holy Ghost. You are, I own,

own, more Modest, and only assert that the Bishop approaches to *It*: I commend your *Forbearance*. But then the *Reason* of the *Proximity*, is a very Bad One. The *Sin*, you say, was the *Denial of the Operation of the Holy Ghost, in the Ministry of our Saviour*: His Lordship's, the *Denying the Operation of the same Spirit in the Ministers whom Christ has sent*; i. e. of the *Apostles*, for I know of no other *Ministers* that *Christ sent*. But this you cannot say the Bishop denies: So, I suppose, you mean *The present Ministers of the Church*. Where the Bishop denies this *Operation*, I do not know; unless you call denying to be as it was in the *Apostles*, denying entirely; and *that*, I hope, even you will not dare to affirm. You say, *They are employ'd in the same Work that He was*. So are all Good Men, who study the *Happiness and Salvation of Mankind*. But then you add, *He left his Authority with them*, with the *Apostles*, do you mean? To *Them*, indeed He left *Power*, to work *Miracles* as He did, to *Baptize*; but All in His *Name*: He called them *Friends*, and *did all Things that He heard of his Father*, He made known to them: He promis'd to send them the *Comforter*, the *Spirit of Truth* to guide them into all *Truth*; that He should show them *Things to come*; and that

All Things that the Father hath, being His;
 that Spirit should take of His, and shew it
 to Them: But no Mention is ever made,
 that He left His Authority with Them;
 and much less, that He design'd, It should
 long to any after Them, who were like
 to be much less Able to manage It. If
 this had been his Intention, how easy
 would it have been to have express'd it;
 and when, (Mat. xxviii. 18.) He said, *All*
Power is given to Me in Heaven and Earth,
 have subjoyned, *And I give It unto*
you, and then to have added farther, and
Those who shall be your Successors. But
 there is nothing like this, thro' the Whole
 Gospel: Therefore to claim this, would be
 an Impious Pretence. The Promise of the
 Holy Ghost, to remain with Them to the
 End of the World, may be accomplish'd,
 His remaining with all sincere Chri-
 stians, and enabling them to do their Duty,
 and supporting Them under their Afflicti-
 ons, and Persecutions, from Jews, Heathens,
 False Christians; (which Latter Ones,
 have been the Severest and Longest of
 them all;) without His being suppo-
 sed to continue to Them, the Powers
 by which He assisted the Apostles. The
 Promise of binding and loosing, related whol-
 ly to the Apostles, as I shall have Occa-
 sion afterwards fully to make out. The de-
 claring

claring, that *whosoever despises Them,*
spised Him, and Him that sent Him,
songed chiefly to the Apostles, and to
Doctrine, which They were entrusted
preach to the World, and were enabled
support with the Demonstration of the S
rit, and of Power, i. e. both by Prophe
and the Working Miracles. But it may
so have Reference to all the Disciples
Christ, who are not to be despised and
tested, and much less, to be lorded o
barrassed, and persecuted for Conscience
without incurring His and his Father's
Vengeance. And yet—say you! They,
are the Promises of our Saviour, whay
you would represent the Bishop, as
ting at nought, by telling you, not to t
ble your Heads about (i. e. so as to th
your Salvation depends upon) any Part
lar Sort of Clergy; that all is to be t
acted between God, and our selves; that
mane Benedictions (on which our Salvat
is pretended to hang) are Insignificant
fles: Formidable Doctrines! easier to
declaimed against, than disproved. W
you say, and not only say, but pr
from the New Testament, that our Salv
on does depend on a Particular Sort of
gy; (even tho' it be impossible to h
that Sort of Clergy, without wounding
Consciences; as when, at the Reformat

n, we left the *Particular Sort of Clergy* of the
 n, Church of Rome, because we were perswa-
 to ed They had left God, and Christ, and
 ed refused to return to Them;) that *all* is not
 led be transacted between God, and ourselves;
 e s that something necessary to Salvation,
 oph depends on Other Men, whom we are to
 ay hurt, and Flatter for Salvation, which is
 ples the Gift of God, and which They may
 nd withhold from us, tho we obey all the
 d laws of God, and come up to the Terms
 ce propos'd in the Gospel; that, finally, hu-
 athome Benedictions are this One Thing Neces-
 They, which Passionate and Weak Men
 why refuse, or grant, as They please.
 as But indeed in your Way of Arguing,
 to there is very little Occasion for Proof, on
 th your Side. It is but asking, (p. 13. and
 Part) what Proof have you against this?
 e that Scripture? What Declaration of God?
 hat is He called it wicked, and presumptuous
 lvat humane Hands, to pretend to bestow his
 nt Grace? Or kept them in own Hands? Or
 to all He dispense them only Himself?
 Weve you any Antiquity, Fathers, and Coun-
 pri on your Side; the Infallible Judges,
 Salv and Arbiters of Religion, you should have
 of Cited? How long is the Salvation of Men
 o to be thus sported with? Are not These
 ing to set up such Enormous Claims, to prove
 rman their Right to them, before we are to sub-
 E mit

mit to them? Where are *Your* Proofs
Your Scriptures for this? Where are any
Declarations of God, or Christ, to maintain
you in this Pretence? Has He told it
You only, and to no One else? To *Those*
whose Interest it may be to impose on
Others, and not to *Those*, whom such
Declaration would prevent from being im-
posed upon? Is it enough to say, *The*
Whole Tenor of Scripture is against your
Lordship, (p. 14.) without so much as men-
tioning One Passage, or one Intimation in
to support such a Bold Assertion? Neither
the Jewish Dispensation, (as I shall shew
you hereafter, when we come to enquire
into it,) nor the Christian Religion, as we
have shewn you already, will help you
out here. An Express Commission, is what
we expect; and till you can produce
from Scripture, the Bishop's Assertion
stands Firm like a Rock, and remains
vincibly True; That we offend God in
expecting his Graces from any Hands, but
from His own. But the Current of Tradition is
against Him. A Speech fit indeed to come
from the Mouth of a Member of the
pretended Infallible Church of Rome; but
unworthy of a Member of the Church of
Christ, and of One who pretends to receive
his Commands from Him alone, and
owe his Obedience, in such Points only,

him, and to his *Father* ! That this has
 been the *Opinion* of Few Churches, or
 Churchmen, I cannot but confess, and la-
 ment ; as that which gives the greatest
 Advantage to the *Libertines* of the Age,
 and the greatest *Prejudice* against *Religi-*
 on ; which *They* take to be, what some re-
 ly represent *It* to be, a *Design* only to
 in *Riches*, and *Power* into the *Hands* of
 men, who would perswade Others, that
 they have the *Keeping* of *God's Gifts* and
 places, and of the *Keys* of the *Kingdom* of
 Heaven. But that *this* is not the *Doctrine*
 of our Church, I have already proved ;
 and justified *It* from so great a *Reproach*,
 and so *Foul* a *Calumny* : If Others endea-
 our to fix *this* upon Our Church, They
 must answer for the Consequences ; and
 destroying from under *It*, the Foun-
 dation on which *It* stands, as Separated
 from the Church of Rome ; and its very
 in being, as a *Christian Church*, by setting *It*
 thus in Opposition to its only *Head*,
 and Governor.

But against this *Affertion* of yours, that
 the whole *Tenor* of the *Scripture* is against
 Lordship, We have to oppose : not on-
 ly Arguments from the *Wisdom*, and *Good-*
 ness of *God*, who could not have left
 his *Graces* in *Hands*, that were so liable to
 be applied *Them* ; or our *Salvation* to be

trifled with, and tossed about by the *Furies* and *Passions*, and *Vices*, or even *Weakness* of *Men*: nor from the *Design* of the *Gospel* alone, which was to bring *Men*, to *God* and not to their *Fellow-Creatures*, for *Eternal Life*; to obey *Him*, and not *Them* in all *Matters* of *Religion*; to obtain *Pardon* for the *Sins* of *Him*, and not of *Them*; to love one another, and bear one with another, and not to exercise *Dominion*, and *Tyranny* over one another: but from the *express Words*, and *Command* of our *Saviour* (Mat. xxiii. 8, 9, 10.) *Not to be called Master, or Sir, or Father, (or Giver of Graces, as Fathers are,) upon Earth*; for *One is your Master, even Christ*, and *all ye are Brethren*; and to call no Man *Father*, (or *Giver of Graces*, as *Fathers* are,) upon *Earth*; for *One is your Father* (of whom you are to expect *Heavenly Graces*) which is in *Heaven*, (who will give you his *Gifts* and *Graces* thro' *Me*) *ye expect Them from Him alone*, which *Me*, your only *Mediator* with *Him*, it, come up to the *Terms*, which I only have *Power on Earth* to propose to you.)

This is our *Saviour's* Sense. How you may dislike it, I cannot tell. But remember his *Charge* that follows, and was directed even to the *Apostles*; *Neither be ye called Masters, for One is your Master, even Christ*; (i. e. *Impose no Terms on Christians*, but what I impose, and command)

Furth^r teach; and teach them to expect *Grac^e*
 e *Gospe*l *Favour* only from God, and thro' Me^e
 to God Condition that they comply with *These*
 or *Enorms*.) But He that is *Greatest* among you,
 Them all be your *Servant*, or *Minister*, (i. e.
 rdon shall not Lord it over the rest, or pretend
 to distribute *God's Graces* as he pleases,
 noth^t shall *Minister* them to others accord-
 ing to my *Directions*, and the *Directions* of
 the *Infalible Spirit*, which you shall then
*Savio*ur.) I would have *You*, and *All*, with
 led by, that pretend to these *Enormous Claims*,
 ist, remember how our *Saviour* concludes this
Man command to Them; *Whosoever shall exalt*
Himself, (into the Seat of God, and pre-
 tend to give out *His Gifts* thence, as if
Heaven were his own) shall be *abased*; and
 who that *humbleth Himself*, (He that is
 contented with the *Ministry* or *Service*,
 which God allots Him, and is faithful in
 it, arrogating no more to Himself,)
 shall be *exalted*; (when the *Day of Distin-*
ction comes, in which God shall render to e-
 very *Man* according to his *Deeds*.)

rem You quote next, in order to support
 was our Cause, the *Words* of a *Prelate*,
 her *Use Learning*, *Judgment*, and *Protestan-*
 ter, &c, I am as ready to acknowledge, as
 a *Ch*ristian are; nay, I am so persuaded of it,
 and I dare say, his Lordship will have
 the *Pleasure* to hear his *Words* brought

as a *Proof* of somewhat in *Dispute* among *Divines*, as if *He* were to be the *Infallible Judge*. As the *World* stands, *Good Men* may, and often do, differ; but then *Good Men* cannot be for having their *Authority* their *having said It*, pass for an *Argument* but are themselves ready on better *Evidence* to change their *Sentiments*. I suppose his *Lordship* meant not that the *Intervention of other Men*, was *necessary to our Salvation*, absolutely and really *necessary*: but that it was *God's Ordinary Method*, to point *Men* to perform some *outward Sign* of the *Graces* which He gave Himself; which *Those Graces* did not constantly in company; but *did*, or *did not*, as the *Disposition of Those* to whom the *Outward Sign* were applied, was *good*, or *bad*; and *They* were *fit*, or *not fit*, to receive them. If any thing more be meant by that *Expression*; I hope, *Good Men* will consider that, *if the Intervention of other Men*, absolutely and really *necessary to our Salvation*, then *our Salvation* depends *on Them*, and not on *God*; unless it be so that *Those Men*, whose *Intervention* is *necessary to our Salvation*, are under the *immediate Conduct*, and *Guidance of God's Holy Spirit*, as to the applying that *Intervention*, and consequently are in *Danger of misapplying It*; which I

ve cannot be affirmed, with any Like-
 hood of Others since the *Apostles*. You
 conclude this Paragraph: *You* (the Bishop
 of Bangor;) expressly exclude all Persons from
 having any thing to do with our Salvation;
 and say it wholly depends upon God, and our
 selves. A Strange Doctrine indeed! but
 strange in the Mouth of our Saviour,
 of the Bishop of Bangor! Strange! that
 Jesus Christ should teach us, that God is
 our only Father, on whom we are to de-
 pend, for Grace, and Favour, and Salvati-
 on; and that He himself is the only Medi-
 ator, thro' whose Hands all that is to come
 to us; the only Master, or Teacher, who
 is to Instruct us in the Terms which his
 Father requires of us; and that We have
 no such Power towards one another, but
 that all Brethren, all equal, and upon a
 level, and depend not one upon another!
 Strange! that the Bishop of Bangor, should
 be to follow his Great Master, in teach-
 ing such Doctrine! But Stranger than all
 this is, that Christians should not be a-
 ble to receive It: And that a single Man,
 having the Courage to stand up, almost A-
 lone, in Defence of his Lord and Master's
 prerogative, should thereby draw upon
 himself, the Odium and Clamor of so Ma-
 ny even among Those, that own the same
 Lord, and Master, and pretend to be His
 Disciples.

You go on, (p. 16.), and represent the Bishop of Bangor, and the Author of the Rights of the Christian Church, shaking Hands together: and that Author calling the Consecration of the Elements a Conjurat[i]on, and the Bishop calling, Sacramental, Authoritative Benediction, a Term of Art, you infer, (according to a new Rule of Logick,) that his Lordship gives too plain an Intimation, tho' in more remote and softer Terms, that in his Sense, the Clergy of the Church, are little better than so many Jugglers. First, This has no Connexion, with the Passage in the Rights, &c. to which you compare it: And then, in his Lordship's Sense, the Clergy of this Church are no Jugglers, but where they desert the Church and stand up for an Authority, which the Church never claims; but which is claimed by Some in order to destroy, and subvert not only the Church, but the State. You tell his Lordship, (p. 16.) that, if he only means (by Benedictions) to declare, on what Terms God will give his Blessings to Christians, or to express their own Heart's Wishes for Them; this, you say, is what every Body understands that they may say to the Clergy or Laity, Men or Women: And then, you humbly presume, that the Good Bishop abovemention'd, meant more. What that Excellent Bishop meant, is not to

point at present. But to what you say
 re, I answer; that tho' *Any One* may
 declare, what he takes to be the *Terms* of
 the Gospel, and wish that Others may faith-
 fully observe them: Yet *Any One* may
 do this in the *Name* of the *Whole*
Church, or *Congregation*, unless He be ap-
 pointed to that *Office*: Tho' every Man
 may do it, it is no Man's *Business* and pro-
 fessional *Employment*, but *His* who is set a-
 part for it, and is as Mr. Hales styles it,
Professor à Cathedrà. If you deny this,
 you may with as much Reason say; that,
 every One be allow'd to instruct, and
 justify His Brother, then the *Pastors*, and
publick Teachers, may not be appointed
 to do it out of the *Pulpit*; unless it be
 allow'd, that there is some *Infallibleness* in
 their *Doctrine*, which is wanting in that
 of others. This is, in Effect, to say; be-
 cause every Body may do it, and are ob-
 liged according to their *Call*, and *Abili-
 ties*, and *Opportunities*; therefore *None*
 can be more particularly obliged to do
 it, by a more *Immediate Call*, having
 this as their only *Business*, by greater
Abilities, and more frequent *Opportu-
 nities*. This answers likewise your o-
 ther *Objection*, (p. 17.); that, if it be as
 the Bishop says, then, there is no *Diffe-
 rence*, between the *Prayers* of a *Priest*, and

a *Nurse*, called to *Sick Persons*: for, I conceive, the whole *Difference*, that there can be, supposing them Both *Sincere*, and *Good*, is the *Difference* of their *Abilities*; that it's probable the *Minister* knows better, how to move the *Conscience* of the *Sick Man*, than the *Nurse*. This proves no *Authority* in the *Priest*; but only the *Capacity*, that a *Good Priest* may be in, giving *Assistance*.

YOU next (p. 17, 18, 19.) bring some *Passages* out of the *Old Testament*, to support your *Notion* of *Benedictions*; which tho' every thing you say of *them* were granted you, (as it is not,) yet prove nothing to your *Purpose*. For, 1. Those whom you mention as *Blessing* others, were either *Prophets*, or had the *Express Command* of *God* for it. 2. And besides, *Scriptures* are of the less *Weight*, because in the *Old Dispensation*, from which they are taken, the *Blessings* of *God*, promised by *Him*, were *Temporal Blessings*; which are still very much in the *Hands* of *Men*, tho' *God* over-rules *Them*, when *He* pleases. And it is no great *Wonder* that *He* should make *Them* depend on the *Prayers* of *Men*, and especially *Prophets*: when we see *He* has always made *them*, and does still make *them*, depend on the *Actions* of *Men*, and often the *wickedest Actions* of the *worst Men*.

cept where *He* interposes, in his *Provi-*
dence, to alter, and force the *Natural* and
ordinary Course of Things. 3. It's quite a
different Thing, to say, that *God* has pla-
ced the *Salvation*, the *Future* and *Eternal*
Happiness of Men, in the *Hands of Others*;
and has made it to depend on any thing
which *They* could grant, or with-hold, as
They pleased. *This* is to be determined
finally, and Only, at the *Great Day of Judg-*
ment: and *God*, by keeping *this* in his own
Hands, keeps *that*, whereby *He* will then
justify his *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, to all the
world, from all those *Objections*, which
the *Inequality of Things here below* raises in
the *Minds of Men*; who yet should not
judge rashly of *It*, because *They* cannot
see the *Whole*. Could you disprove
this, (as I am perswaded you cannot,) you
could take from us all *Possible Justification*
of *God's Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, and all the
best *Proof of a Future Life from Reason*. 4.
Therefore it is not enough to bring some
passages out of the Old Testament, relating
to *Temporal Blessings*, *Prayed for by Pro-*
phets, or *Priests of the Levitical Priest-*
hood, and which *They* were always expres-
sly commanded to *pray for*, when *They* did
so: but you should produce some *Express*
passages, some *Declaration of our Saviour*, or
of his *Apostles*; that the *Favour of God*, that
Sal-

Salvation, that our Future and Eternal Happiness, was thereby appointed to depend on the Authoritative Benedictions, or even on the Prayers, or Declarations, of Others than Those, who are under such immediate Conduct, and Guidance of the Infallible Spirit; as suffer Them not in those Points to Err. Till you can do this, all the rest of your Arguing, amounts to nothing. If you could do this, you would take away all the Best Arguments for our Religion, and discredit the New Testament; from which you would make that False and Impossible Doctrine to arise.

This being premised, I shall now examine the Force of your Texts. The 1st. (Gen. xx. 7.), where God says to Abimelech, in a Dream, *He (Abraham) is a Prophet, he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.* First, God gives a Reason why Abraham should be heard, *He is a Prophet* which, I think, cannot relate to our Clergy. Then, the Thing to be granted on his Prayer, was *Life, Temporal Life.* Abimelech had injured Abraham, by taking away his Wife from Him; and therefore God would not Pardon the Offence, so as to save his Life, unless Abraham, whom he had injured, would intercede for Him. Here is no Prophet-Craft; but a direct Command of God to a particular Person, up

an Injury *He* had done to another:
 and, which is remarkable, the *Command*
 not given to *Abraham*, that *He* might
 communicate it to *Abimelech*, who should be
 obliged to take *His* Word for it, but to
Abimelech Himself. Could you produce
 such a *Command* from *God*, to the *People*
 who are under the Care of the *Christian*
Clergy; or prove that *They* are *Prophets*;
 that some *Others* had injured *them*; or
 that this *Blessing* of *Abraham*, affected *Abi-*
melech's *Salvation*: The *Text* would be
 somewhat more to your Purpose; and you
 would indeed clear the *Clergy* (if Any of
 Them do pretend to such things,) of all
 Craft, in claiming those *Powers* of *Blessing*
 and *Absolving*. The 2d. *Text*, (p. 18.) is
 from (*Deut. xxxiv. 9.*); where *Joshua* is
 said to be full of the *Spirit* of *Wisdom*; for
Moses had laid his *Hand* upon Him. I own,
 that *Moses* had no *Natural* Power, any
 more than the *Clergy* have now, to confer
 the *Spirit*, or *God's* *Graces*; and that *They*
 are Both equally *Weak* and *Insufficient* for
 these Purposes, of themselves, and equally
 powerful when it pleases *God* to make them
 so. But it is this *Pleasure* of *God*, which
 makes the *Difference*. *Moses* had an *Ex-*
 press *Command* from *God*, for what *He* did;
 (*Numb. xxvii. 18.*), The *LORD* said unto
Moses, take thee *Joshua*, the Son of *Nun*, a
 Man

Man in whom is the Spirit, (so it was on
 a greater Measure of *It*, that came upon
 him, after *Moses* had *Laid his Hands* on
 him,) and lay thy Hand upon Him — and
 give Him a Charge in their Sight — — —
 (v. 22.) *Moses did as the Lord commanded*
Him. It does not even appear by this
 that *Joshua* received the *Spirit* by the Im-
 position of *Moses's Hands*; but only, that
 He receiv'd a Charge thereby, and that
 the *Spirit of Wisdom*, upon that, came
 Him in a greater Degree. When you pro-
 duce a Commission to the Christian Clergy
 like This given to *Moses*, the Greatest
 all the Prophets, I shall own this Text
 have some Relation to be the present Dis-
 pute. But as it is, it has none at all. Your
 3d Instance in *Job*, (*Job* xlii. 8.) is not
 more to your Purpose; for, as in the Case
 of *Abimelech*, so here *Eliphaz and his Friends*
 had injured *Job*; as there, so here, there
 was an Express Command of God given to
 Those who were to depend upon Another's
 Prayer for Pardon from God; and in both
 Places, the Whole related to Temporal
 Blessings. And God seems to have made
 those Blessings to depend on the Intercession
 of the Person Injured, that so Men may
 learn to be Cautious, and Careful, not care-
 lessly to injure and judge one another: For
 that was *Eliphaz's Crime*. Show that an-
 other thing

ing of all this regards the *Christian Cler-*
 e up, and you will bring *It* closer to the
 nds *Present Question.*

As for your *Next Quotations*; the *Bles-*
 — *ings*, which the *Levitical Priests* were ap-
 mand *ointed* to pronounce over the *People*:
 y the *they* are nothing to the Point. For you
 he *ould* first have shewn that the *Christian*
 y, the *ergy* had the same *Commands*: And then
 d that *These Blessings* of the *Levites*, first
 me *ere* not only in relation to *Temporal*
 ou *possessions*, or if *They* were more, that *They*
 Clergy *ere* not *Bare Prayers*, or *Conditional*
 test *declarations*. That *They* were no more
 Text *an* this, taking *Them* in their largest
 nt *Dextent*, I think, is very evident from the
 'Yo *hole Account* of that *Nation*, both in the
 is n *istorical Books* of the *Old Testament*, and
 Case *the Prophets*; where we frequently find,
 Friend *at* whom the *Priest* blest, *God* cursed.
 the *e* find the *Priests*, in the *Times* of the
 ven *rophets*, almost always in a *Combination*
 other *ainst Them*, tho' *These Prophets* were
 n bo *nt* by *God*: and, no doubt, at that Time
 mpor *e Priests* persisted in *Blessing* the *Peo-*
 made, in *Opposition* to the *Prophets* of
 rcess *ed*, and to their *Declarations*, and *Threat-*
 e *manys* in *His Name*. Any One, that reads
 ot e *at the Writings* of the *Prophets*, cannot
 : *For* Ignorant of this. But *Malachi*, more
 at an *irectly* than *Any of Them*, says this very
 thing *Thing*:

Thing: (Mal. ii. 12.) And now, O ye Priests, this Commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, if ye will not lay it to Heart, give Glory unto my Name, saith the Lord of Hosts, I will send a Curse upon you, and will curse your Blessings: Yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to Heart. What can be more Express than this? And besides, all the Blessings, and Curses, which the Priests were to use, were directly prescribed to Them in Words, and not left to their Discretion, to prescribe them to Themselves; or to the Jewish Church to appoint them. So Those in the 27th and 28th Chapters of Deuteronomy relate not to their Particular Persons, but to Actions, that Whoever does such Actions shall be Blessed, or Cursed; and gives Authority to the Levites, or Priests, to Bless, or Curse any Others, as They pleased; All which amounts to no more than Conditional Declarations; and withal related only to Temporal Blessings. If therefore you mean no more (as you affirm in 19.) than this, by the Authoritative Administration of the Christian Clergy, you do not at all differ from his Lordship, who does not deny this; tho' he does not expressly affirm it, as indeed He had no Authority to do. But it's plain, you mean a great deal more; and that you understand

en this of the *Levitical Priests*, as a
 at deal more than what it really is.
 own, and contend with you, that our
 iour was by so much a *Greater Priest*,
 Mediator, than *Aaron*, as his *Priest-*
 d, and *Mediatorship* did not cease, as
 ron's did, at his *Death*, but continues
 ever; and does not pass from *One* to
 other, as the *Aaronical Priesthood*, but
 rains for ever in *His Person Unchangea-*
 (*Heb. vii. 24.*); as I shall shew more
 Length, when I come to examine your
 ions of the *Priesthood*. *Christ sent His*
 stles, as (not with the same *Power*,
 in the same *Manner*, as) *His Father*
 sent *Him*. But *They* were not *His*
 cessors, but *His Apostles*, or *Messengers*.
 his *Eternal Priesthood*, none could suc-
 d *Him*. The *Aaronical Priesthood*, is
 ed a *Type*, and *Emblem* of *His*. He
 ing into the *World*, and offering up
 self, as a *Lasting*, and *Final Sacrifice*
 Sin, put an End to all *Mediatorships*,
Priesthoods, but *That* which was to
 inue for ever in *His own Person*; and
 efore in that *Sense*, He neither had,
 could have, any *Successors*. That the
 les appointed any *Proper Successors* to
 selves, in the *Powers* that were given
 m; or that *They* had *Power* given *Them*
 o do, does not appear. *They* were the
 F only

only Persons, whom Christ entrusted, Publish to the World, what was His Religion. This was Personal to Them; They had the Infallible Spirit of God, assist Them in this Work. Others as Them, were to abide by their Declaration of This. And, therefore, however I might appoint Others, to Govern the Church; (not as Lords and Masters, to mince over It, but as Pastors to lead Flock to good, and wholesome Pasture) They did not, nor could They, appoint to preach Another Gospel, but that which They had already fully preached to the World, and left to the Church, in their Writings; and consequently, no Pro Successors to their Office of Apostleship. thus your Argument (if I may call for thing affirmed without any Proof, by Name,) falls to the Ground.

(P. 20.) You change the Matter in dispute; and say, *it's evident from the Plain of Scripture, which you have quoted, from the whole Tenor of Sacred Writ, (wherein) that God has deputed Fallible and Unassured Men, to Bless Authoritatively in His Name, and has placed the Salvation of Others such Performances of Theirs: No but) it may consist with His Justice, and Goodness to depute Men to act in his Name, and Ministerial towards the Salvation of Others*

to lay a Necessity upon his Creatures of
 justifying themselves for his Favour, and re-
 ceiving His Graces, by the Hands and Inven-
 tion of mere Men. Who ever question'd
 this? Does the Bishop ever deny this?
 That Christ, who was made a Man, was
 sent by His Father, to act in His
 Name, who gave Him all Power to do it
 actually: That Christ again deputed His
 Apostles, who were Men, to act in His,
 in His Father's Name, to preach His Gos-
 pel to the World; and gave Them the In-
 visible, and Unerring Spirit, to conduct,
 and assist Them in this Work? Does He
 deny that Any Men may be Ministerial
 in the Salvation of Others; and that
 some may be singularly so? Nay, does
 He deny that, if God had made Them In-
 visible, as He made the Apostles, He
 might then justly make His Graces, and
 His Power, to depend upon Their Inter-
 cession. God has not, it seems, thought
 fit to do this; so it's plain, He does not
 do it in the Other. If you mean by Mere
 Fallible Unassisted Men, He must
 deny it, or must affront God's Wisdom,
 Power, and Goodness; if Infallible, and
 assisted by the Holy Ghost, so as to prevent
 them from falling into Error, He does
 not deny it; but only denies it of such as
 are weak and confessedly are not so. This

is mere *Fallacy*. - And what need you have added that Injurious Misrepresentation of the Bishop, that because He has taught the *Layity*, that all, (as to *Salvation*, & God's Favour,) is to be transacted between God and themselves; (which He has taught them, with *Christ* and his *Apostles* on His Side, who taught it long before Him) therefore He has taught Them, that they need not value any Particular Sort of *Clergy* in the World: When, it's plain to every Eyes, his Lordship has refused no *Value* to the *Clergy*, but such, as to give Them would be to Injure God's Honour; and to suppose Them to Claim, would be might to Injure *Theirs*. His Lordship has taught Any to despise the great *Sin* that Good Pastors may do them; but to fear and guard against the *Danger* and *Inquietude*, and *Terrors*, that the grounded Pretences of Bad Ones, (such as the *Roman Clergy*, and Those who imitate Them,) may unwarily involve them in. As for your leaving It to the Judge, and Searcher of Hearts, to judge on what Principles, and Motives, his Lordship has been induced to teach these Things. You are much in the Right, to think so, and, it would be Happier for *Christians* and for *Mankind* in General, if all *Clergymen* would steadily do the same, and

ke upon Them to Judge the Hearts of
 en. Then *Persecutions*, and *Massacres*,
 and *Imprisonments*, and *Ruin* in this *World*,
 Account of *Religious Differences*, would
 longer be the *Reproach* of the *Christian*
 me, and the *Great Obstacle* of its *Pro-*
 ss, and the *Chief Cause* of its *Visible*
 cay.

As to your *Profession*, (which I am
 willing to believe, you make in the *Sin-*
 city of your *Heart*,) that if you hated
 ristianity, you could not express it more,
 n by teaching what his Lordship has pub-
 ly taught: I must tell you, that it is
 r New Schemes, of *Placing the Salvation*
 Men on other *Fallible Men*, and not,
 ere God has only placed It, on *Sincere*
 edience to Him; that renders, not only
 ristianity *Hateful* in the *Eyes* of *Unbe-*
 vers, who see such *Enormous Claims* set
 and have seen so much *Wealth*, and
 ver obtained by the like *Claims* hereto-
 e; but even render the *Great*, and *Good*
 d Himself *Hateful* in their *Eyes*; when
 y are made falsely to believe, that He
 Cruelly trusted the *Salvation* of His
 atures in *Hands*, that too often make
 t *Pretended Trust*, serve only their own
 rldly *Ends*, and *Wicked Designs*, of *Tri-*
 bing over, and *Enriching* themselves by
 ils of their *Fellow-Creatures*.

You say, (p. 21.), *It will not follow from any thing You have said, that the Liberty have lost their Christian Liberty; that no Body can be saved, but whom the Clergy please to save; that They have the Arbitrary Disposal of Happiness to Mankind.* It will not follow, indeed, from any thing you have said, because what you have said, you have not yet proved; but if you had, these Consequences, (which stare you so much,) would inevitably follow, however you may overlook them, and get your own Conclusions. For, if the Intervention of Others be necessary to our Salvation; if it be Absurd to say, that it wholly depends on God and Ourselves, as you have said (p. 15.): you must own, that, unless Those Men, whose Intervention is necessary, are Infallible, and are so Governed by the Holy Ghost, as never to Err in their Matters; our Salvation depends on something, that is wholly in the Power of those Men to grant, or to with-hold. And, therefore, there is no need to prove that the Laity have no Christian Liberty; that all depends on the Clergy, and Themselves as living in Subjection to Them; that no Body can be saved, but whom the Clergy please; and therefore None will be saved, but such as will Flatter and Please Them; and lastly, that They have the Arbitrary Disposal of the

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mal *Happiness of Mankind*. How con-
tent this is with the *Wisdom*, and *Good-*
ness of God, I leave you, and the World
to judge.

You ask, in order to clear your self of
this, (which you, now you reflect upon it,
cannot but feel to be the grossest Absurdi-
ty) was *Abimelech's Happiness in the Dis-*
position of Abraham? Or that of *Eliphaz*
Job's? I answer, their *Temporal Happi-*
ness was ; and that is the only *Happiness*
that can be there understood : which *Tem-*
poral Happiness God thought fit to subject
to the *Pardon*, and *Intercession* of *Job*, and
Abraham ; that so Men may not be so rea-
dy to *injure*, and *judge* their *Brethren*, on
every slight *Occasion*, and groundless *Su-*
pposition ; when God had declared He would
wholly pardon their *Sin*, without the
Intercession, and *Pardon* of the *Injured Per-*
son. This was no *Hardship*, as long as it
was only related to the *Good Things of this*
Life, which are not of such vast *Conse-*
quence : But it would be the *Greatest* in
this World, if our *Eternal Happiness* was
to depend upon the *Passions*, and *Humours*
of any Men. This would be such a *Hard-*
ship, as, we are sure, the *Great and Good*
God will never, nor ever did, lay upon his
Creatures.

But you go on, *The Christian Clergy do pretend to this Despotick Empire over the Flocks.* Look but cross the Seas, and see what Tyranny there They openly, and avowedly, Practice, over their Poor, Ignorant, Depressed *Sheep* ; whom They keep in that Condition, that They may the better get them, to submit to be Fleeced of *Them*. Look amongst our selves, *antho* (God be thanked) the Principles of our Church are wholly contrary to it; yet you will see, in the *Spirits* and *Practices* of *Some*, too near an Imitation, of what *They* most pretend to abhor. *They do not indeed assume a Power to damn the Innocent, or punish the Guilty* : but They assume a Power that amounts to the same Thing ; They would have it thought, that always *Those* whom They damn, are *Guilty*, and *Those* whom They save, are *Innocent*.

But then, it is Matter of just Surprize, that you should call That, *Afferting a Power and just Right*, which is the most impious Claim, and the most detracting from the Singular Office of our Great Lord, our Master, and our only Mediator : A Right to reconcile Men to God, and to act in His Name, in Restoring us to God's Favour, which Christ alone has ; and to which alone God has given It ; and has promised solely on His Account, to grant us

pardon of our Sins, upon our observing the
 commands of his Gospel. The Apostles them-
 selves never pretended to this Right, and
 could give no Commission to others for
 Ignorance; as They never actually did give any
 knowledge. They only preached to the World,
 that Gospel of Christ, by which Salvation
 is to be obtained thro' Him alone. Christ's
 promise that He would be with Them to the
 end of the World, proves nothing like this;
 it proves any Commission at all: but was
 only a Promise of such Assistance, as should
 enable Them to execute the Commission,
 which He had before given Them, To
 preach his Gospel to all Nations, and To Bap-
 tize Them in the Name, &c. If from this,
 some Clergy conclude (as you say) that They
 have his (Christ's) Authority; that in Con-
 sequence of it, Their Administrations are ne-
 cessary, and Effectual to the Salvation of
 mankind; that whoever Despise, and Leave
 them, despise Christ, and are out of the Co-
 munion of Grace; they conclude without a
 Foundation; and, indeed, place Them-
 selves in the Seat of Christ, and reign as
 Kings in his Kingdom; or rather erect a
 Kingdom, and Throne of their own, in Op-
 position to Christ's. This is the Bold Pre-
 sumption of the Church of Rome; which all
 Protestants protest against, and which this
 Church of England particularly abhors.

But

But then (p. 22,) you palliate again, and soften these *Claims*; and so continually you are going backward, and forward in your *Arguing*; sometimes *claiming* ever *Right*, then giving them up again, and denying that you ever were for *such Claims*; sometimes making the *Intervention of the Clergy necessary to Salvation*, then affirming that you only mean, that the *Ministry* may be *Useful and Effectual*, with One Hand granting the *Layity Christian Liberty*, and with the Other allowing the *Clergy all Unchristian Tyranny* in one Place owning that People may be *saved*, whether the *Clergy please*, or do *please*, and in another affirming, that *we* ever leaves their *Pastors*, are surely out of the *Covenant of Grace*. An Instance of this, is, that here you change the Strong Term of *Necessary*, and *Effectual Administration* which you had just before used, into *being sent on the Errand of Salvation*, *being made Ministers of Eternal Happiness* to our *Brethren*, and having something to do *with the Salvation of Men*, and such *Dignified Expressions*; which may bear a *proper Sense*, and imply in them no such *Authority* as you spoke of before. Those, not These, are the *Blasphemous Claims*, *Absurd senseless Powers*, that you are reproached with by the Bishop; and

and proper *Arrogant Doctrines of Power*, taken up by *Those* amongst ourselves, against whom his Lordship was writing.

To teach, and perswade them to do what will restore them to, and preserve them in, the *Favour of God*, is the *Proper Office*, and *Employment of Those Appointed to the Christian Church* to serve in the *Ministry*; When *They* do this, *They* are then truly *Ministers*, or *Servants of Christ*, for his *Church*. *They* then truly serve *Him*, and his *Body the Church*, and promote the *Interest of his Religion*. But when *They* pretend to *Bless*, or *Curse*, to *Damn*, or *Save*, by *Authority*, as if *They* knew the *Hearts of Men*; and pretend that *God* confirms *Their Sentences*, and *Decisions*, in *Heaven*; and so make the *Salvation of Men* depend upon *Them*: *They* are then not *Ministers*, and *Servants*, but *Lords*, and *Masters over God's Heritage*; and (one may almost say) over *Christ Himself*, and *His Father*; whilst *They* assume themselves *Right* to dispose of *God's Graces*, and *His Favour*, as it seems good in *Their Eyes*; and pretend to oblige, and tie *Him* down thereby.

In the next Place, (p. 22, 23.) you say the *Force of his Lordship's Exceptions* against these *Powers in the Clergy*, from their

their Frailties, and Infirmities, because Abraham, Job, the Jewish Priests, and Apostles, were Men of like Passions with them, and yet possessed these Powers. I answer, Abraham, and Job, were Prophets, at least Abraham was; They had an expresse Command from God for what They did: The Jewish Priests, as I have shewn, did not Bless Authoritatively, nor were their Blessings always effectual: and besides, whenever those Blessings were, they plainly related only to Temporal Advantages, which entirely alters the Case.

You grievously mistake, when you say (p. 23.) that *our Saviour bid the Jews obey to their Priests, because they sat in Moses's Chair. He says (Matth. xxiii. The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's Seat; who were never all Priests. He cannot even mean, that They were depend upon Those Doctors of the Law for their Salvation; otherwise He justified Them, when, in Compliance with Them and Their Priests, They cried out, Crucify. It's visible, from the whole Passage, that Our Saviour meant no more than this, to exhort the People, to observe, and do, what the Scribes, and Pharisees, out of the Law of Moses, bid them observe; and not to be so prejudiced against any Tradition, which They should deliver thence, because*

came from *Persons* guilty of great *Vi-*
s, and *Errors*, as to disobey the *Law*
 on that Account. Therefore, says He,
Thatsoever They bid you observe (agreeably
 the *Law of Moses*) *that observe to do ;*
but do not ye after their Works, for They
say, and do not. (They do not practice,
 that They cannot help teaching, without
 pronouncing the *Law*; which yet They dare
 not entirely do, for fear of losing their
 credit with the People, who are Religi-
 ously Fond of it :) The same, I am afraid,
 may be said of too many of the *Doctors* of
 the *Christian Law*: *Observe*, what They
 teach you out of the *Gospel*, and not from
 their own *Invention*; *but do not after their*
Works; for They say, and do not: and yet
 this would imply no *Authority* in Them,
 to teach for *Doctrines* of God, the *Com-*
mandments of Men; nor make the *Salva-*
tion of Christians depend upon Them, nor
 their *Intervention* necessary to it.

You make a very wrong Use of an *Ex-*
pression of Paul, and Barnabas at *Lystra*,
Acts xiv. 8.), which serves quite another
 purpose, than what you bring it for; and
 serves to prevent *Men's* being esteemed as
 gods upon *Earth*, and is not given as an
 argument for it, as you would represent it.
 For when the *Priests* of *Jupiter*, and *Mer-*
cury, would have offered *Sacrifices* to Paul
 and

and Barnabas, taking Them for *Thy* Gods; They rent their Cloaths, and run among them, declaring that They were Gods, but Men of like Passions with them, and preached to Them to turn from such Vanities to the Living God. Here They owned indeed They were mere Men; but did They deny Their being *Infalible* Men Filled with the Holy Ghost: No — in the Exercise of Their Mission, They were preserved from all Passion, Infirmary, or Error by that Powerful Spirit, which was in Them. In this They never mention any Possibility of Defects: Nay, They insist on Having the Spirit of God. However, they were still Men, having the same Passions (*ἐπιμαρτυρίαι*) with Other Men; i. e. being Subject to Death, and Sickness; having no Power in Themselves, but receiving all the Power from the One Living God, through his Son Christ: and therefore were not to be worshipped, or esteemed as Gods; but to be looked upon, as only the *Infalible* Teachers of that Doctrine, which came from the only True and Living God.

The Passage from St. Paul, (2 Cor. i. 7.), in which you think the Apostle differs very much from his Lordship, is the very Doctrine his Lordship teaches; and is an Argument for what He affirms. St. Paul says, *We have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels*.

(not this *Authority*, but this *Ministry*,
v. 1.), or this *Gospel*, (as v. 3.) or this
 sight of the *Knowledge of the Glory of God*,
 the *Face*, or *Person*, of *Jesus Christ*, (as
v. 6.) And then He says *This* is commit-
 ted to *Earthen Vessels*, to *Weak*, and *Poor*
 men, (as most of the *Apostles* had been,) that
 the *Excellency of the Power* may be of *God*;
 that *These Earthen Vessels*, *These* mere
 men, being raised to an *Infallible Knowledge*
 of the *Spirit of God*, the weaker *They*
 were before, and are in *Themselves*, the
 more it may appear, that all that they do
 now, is wholly owing to the *Power* and
Excellency of God in Them; and is what
 they could not have done, nor any mere
 men can do, without such *Infallible Assis-*
tance. This is the *Apostle's Sense*. And
 the *Lordship's* is not contrary to this; is
 that, that *God* cannot make *Use* of *Instru-*
ments for his *Glory*: but, that *Those* whom
 He does not so make use of, are not *His*
Instruments; and that *Those*, whom He does
 assist with the *Infallible Spirit*, cannot
 be such *Instruments*, as the *Apostles* were;
 that the *Salvation of Men* be at all trusted
 in them, as it was, in some Measure,
 trusted with the *Apostles*.
 You go on, (p. 23.) saying, *Weak as*
we are, we are *God's Ministers*; and if we
 are either afraid, or ashamed of our *Duty*,
 we

we must perish in the Guilt. We are *Ministers, and Servants* indeed; We are *peculiarly such*, being set apart for *Service, and Ministry* of his Church. *Are We, what the Apostles were?* is the *Question.* Their proper Successors in the *Apostleship?* Are we *Infallible*, as *They* were? Have we the *Spirit leading us into All Truth*, as *They* had? Have We a *Pretence to their Commission?* If We have, let us produce it, and prove it: And I promise you, for My Self, and I dare answer for his Lordship, that We shall be as ready to submit to it, and acknowledge our own *Glories.* But, till that can be done, We must be *afraid*, as long as We know the *Terrors of the Lord*, of arrogating to ourselves *Powers*, which, we think, were never given us; and which we have no Right to, unless they were given Us: of placing Our Selves either in the *Seat of Christ*, or in the *Seat of his Apostles*; lest we should as surely *perish in the Guilt* of that, as we should, if we suffered our selves to be either *afraid or ashamed* of doing what we really, and truly, and what we know to be, our *Duty.* You ask, (p. 24.) Is not the *Prophet proud, who insists on the Authority of his Mission?* Cannot a *Mortal be God's Messenger*, without being *Insolent* in owning it? The *Question* is, not what You may

if You are *Prophets*, or *Messengers* of
 but, whether you are such *Prophets*, or
 such *Messengers*? This is what lies on you
 to prove, and not on the Bishop to disprove.
 You are to allow of no such *Pretextes*, till
 you see them *Testified* to us. And we may
 be sure, God never sends *Men* on his *Messa-*
 ges; but He gives them sufficient *Creden-*
 tials; either the *Power* of working *Miracles*,
 or something *equivalent*; but always such
Testimonies as are full enough to gain them
 credit among Those to whom He sends
 them. These are the *Authorities* You
 ought to have produced, when you claim
 such Powers; and not to have called
 for *Arguments* against them, from Those
 who never knew any *Arguments* for them.
 Now I must here take Notice, that the Bi-
 shop never asserts, (as you put it upon Him,
 4.) That there can be no such *Ministers*,
 because they are mere *Men*; but because
 they are *Fallible*, and *Unassisted Men*, and
 therefore not able to manage such Powers
 as you talk of, of *disposing of*, and *distributing*
 God's *Graces*: nor does He again
 say, that it has pleased God chiefly to
 conduct his *Affairs* with *Mankind*, by the
 Ministry of their *Brethren*; but only af-
 firms, that whenever God does please so to
 do, He renders Those *Men*, whom He so
 employs, capable of the *Service*, or *Minis-*
 try,

stry in which He employs them, by making Them *Infallible*, in those *Points*, and Leading them into all needful *Truth*; and denies, that, where God has not done last, it can be believed, without Affirming Him, that He has done the former.

In the next place, you beg leave to (i. e. quite to alter the State of the Question,) that if the *Natural Weakness* of makes them *Incapable* of being the Instruments of conveying *Grace* to their Brethren; (where no Body in the *World*, that I know says;) if the *Clergy* cannot be of any use or *Necessity* (as if those Two were the same Thing) to their *Flocks*, for this Reason then no *Positive Institutions* in the *Christian Religion*, can procure any *Spiritual Advantages* to the Members of it; then, the *Sacraments* can be no longer any Means of *Grace*; the *Bread and Wine* in the *Lord's Supper*, not having any natural Force or Efficacy, to convey *Grace* to the *Soul*; nor the *Water* in *Baptism* any *Intrinsic Power* to purify the *Soul*, or cleanse from *Sin*. The Consequence must be; that, as *Water and Bread and Wine*, tho' of themselves no Means of *Grace*, may be made so by God, and the *Clergy*, tho' they have the *Communion* of Men, may be constituted by God to convey his *Graces*. (I do not mention what you say of their being *Ministers*.)

Salvation of their Brethren: because, according to Custom, it is only put in to found the Matter; and is nothing to Purpose, no Body denying, that They be so, even without *Infallibility*. I come to your Argument: 1st. The misis being what his Lordship never named, the *Conclusion* has no Regard to it. His Lordship never affirmed, that *Clergy*, tho' mere Men, might not be the *Instruments of Conveying Grace*; and be made of Necessity to their Flocks, if made *Infallible*, and assisted by the *Sanctifying Spirit*: but only affirmed, that *Reasons* are not, and cannot be so, being *fallible*, and not so *Assisted*. This likewise Answers your Consequence, that the *Clergy* may be *Means of Grace*: For tho' *Clergy* might have been made such, if it pleased God; yet, They are not so, nor left by Him *Fallible* and *liable* to error; and cannot be so, as long as They are left in that State.

But, 2^{dly}, the *Instances of the Sacraments* come not up to your Point: for either They are not strictly *Means of Grace*; or God does our *Salvation* absolutely depend on them. Wherefore our Church wisely limits them to be only generally necessary for *Salvation*, and not absolutely so: and in administering a *Sacrament*, makes it to mean

only an *Outward and Visible Sign*, of the *Inward and Spiritual Grace*, given unto Man, and *ordained by Christ Himself*, as a *Mean* whereby we receive the same, and a *Pledge* to assure us thereof: which makes it only a *remote Mean* of Grace, and not an *immediate Mean or Cause* of receiving it. *The Sacraments are Institutions* of our *Behaviour*, which in *Obedience to Him*, we are obliged to observe. But the *Grace, Favour of God* depends always on the *inward Disposition*, producing *Outward Actions*, and not on the *Outward Sign* it. In the *Lord's Supper*, it is the *Commemorating gratefully Christ's Death*, *acknowledging our Obligations to Him*, that *excite us to such a Behaviour and Communion* in our *Lives*, as will obtain *God's Grace or Favour*, that is the *Real Mean* of *Grace* and so, that *Disposition* which produces such *Actions*, is it self alone but a *Remote Mean* of *Grace*; but is *None* at all, that brings forth such *Fruits*: the *Outward Sign* of *Breaking Bread and Drinking Wine*, is but, a more *Remote Mean* of *Grace*, as it is not so *such*, as far as it excites in *Us* such a *Disposition*, as produces a *Life* suitable to it (which will procure us *Grace and Favour* from *God*; and where *It* fails of its full *Effect*, is no *Mean* of *Grace* at all, but rather an *Occasion* of greater *Condemnation* as

of the same is to be said of *Baptism*. The
 to *Mean* of *Grace* there, is the *Present Pardon*
 of *Past Sins*, signified by the *Outward Sign*
 of *Washing with Water*; which immedi-
 ately re-instates Us in the *Favour* of *God*,
 and renders Us in *His Eyes*, as *Pure* as if
 we had never *Sinned*; upon the *Outward*
 Profession of *Believing in Him*, and *Vow*
 of *Obedying His Commands*; which, if we
 persevere in, and continue in that *Profession*
 of *Belief*, will continue Us in that *Fa-*
 vour of *God*, to which we are then restor-
 ed. The *Outward Ceremony* can no other-
 wise be stiled a *Mean of Grace*, than remote-
 ly, as far as it has *These Effects* following it.
 St. *Peter* entirely confirms this *Notion* of
Baptism, (1 *Ep. iii. 21.*); where He ex-
 pressly lays our *Salvation*, not on the *Out-*
 ward Sign, but on the *Inward Disposition*:
Baptism, says He, *doth also now save Us*,
not by the putting away the Filth of the Flesh,
but by the Answer of a good Conscience towards
God, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 But, I own, that, could you prove the
 Power of *Clergy* to be as *Positive* an *Insti-*
 tution of *Christ*, as the *Two Sacraments*
 are; (which you cannot, and do not e-
 ven pretend to prove from *Scripture*, as I
 have fully show, when I come to examine
 this Point;) you would then indeed prove,
 as necessary to *Salvation*, as the *Sacra-*
 ments;

ments; because then our *Obedience* to *Christ* would oblige Us always to adhere to *God* equally. But till you do that, your seeing *Arguments* from the *Sacraments*, and *Institutions* of *Christ*, are wholly *Foreign* to your *Purpose*.

3dly, I answer to your *Question*; (p. 2) *Is Man the only Creature God cannot make subservient to his Designs?* The only Being who is too weak for an *Omnipotent* *God* to render effectual towards attaining the End of his *Grace*? That *God* may, if it seem good to Him, make any *Man* subservient to any of his *Designs*, by raising Him to a *Capacity* of being so; and may render the weakest Being, as effectual, as the strongest, towards attaining the Ends of *Grace*. This He shewed, He could do, actually did do, in raising *Poor* and *Ignorant* *Fishermen* to be the *Apostles* of his *Begotten Son*; in sending Them to preach his *Gospel* to all *Nations*; in making Them and Those on whom they laid their Hands to speak with *Tongues*, and *Prophecy*; in flowing on Them the *Power* of working *Miracles*; in possessing them of an *Inflexible*, and *Unerring Spirit*; in leading Them by that *Spirit* into all *Truth*; and making Them the *Keepers*, and *Deliverers* of *Oracles*; and finally, in giving Them *Success*, in their *Extraordinary Ministry*.

and spreading his Religion, by Their Means,
 over so large a Portion of the Earth. These
 are convincing Proofs, that He in his Al-
 mighty Power may raise Men, to be Instru-
 ments of any of his greatest Designs, and
 purposes. But, even in the Ordinary Course
 of Humane Affairs, He makes Men sub-
 servient to his Designs, even the Wickedest
 Men; using them either as Instruments
 for punishing Others; or of doing good to
 them. And it is plain from the Gospel, that
 He has made every Man, that believes in
 Him, zealous towards attaining the Ends of his
 Grace; as He has therein proposed to every
 Man the Terms, upon which He may
 obtain it, thro' his Dearly Beloved Son,
 Christ Jesus; and has not made it depend
 on the Will, and Humours of other Men,
 or on their Own Actions, and Dispositions.
 I must only remind you here, of your
 continuing to Misrepresent his Lordship,
 when (p. 25.) you say, He rejects the
 Necessity of Humane Administrations, because
 they are Humane; i. e. because in your Sense
 the Word Humane, they are performed
 by mere Men. This is a gross Misrepre-
 sentation; for the Bishop does not reject
 them, because They are Humane, in the
 sense of being performed by mere Men;
 but because Those Administrations He is
 arguing against, and on which our Salva-

tion is pretended to depend, are *human* in the *Sense* of being performed by *Mere Authority* of Men, not *Empowered* nor *Enabled* by God to perform *Them*, under that *Notion*.

You are, I think, very unfortunate in your *Quotations* from the *Old Testament* for none of them have in the least supported your *Cause*: Nor does this of *Nathan* the *Syrian*, (*p. 25.*) commanded *Elisha* to *Wash Seven Times in Jordan*, oblige you any more. This was a *Particular Preceptive Command* to *Him* from God, by the *Prophet*, upon which his *Leprosy* was to be healed; perhaps design'd to try the *Temper*, and *Obedience* of the *Syrian General*; who, upon the *Pride* of his *Heart*, contemning *Jonathan* in Comparison of *Abana and Pharpar*, Rivers of *Damascus*, was going away without being healed; but, on better Thought, complying with the *Prophet's Direction*, sent *Him* from God, was healed of his *Leprosy*. But what *Relation* has this to *Our* *Actions* of *Other Particular Men*, which are made necessary to our *Salvation*; but where God has not pleased to make so: and where which *They* can show no *Commission* from God to *Them*, to oblige us to comply with such their *Claims* and *Pretexts*; nor any *Command* to us, to place our Confidence in such *Actions*, when performed.

more, more than when performed by O-

entirely allow your Consequence, (p. 10), and, I think, with the Common Sense of Mankind on my Side; that every Institution, that has not some Natural Force and Power to produce the Effects designed by it, I add, that is not an Institution of God, for our Good, but of Men, for their Glory and Advantage,) is to be rejected as trifling and Ineffectual, to give it no other Terms.

And now the Sum of this whole Matter, we make to be This: That, as God has Substituted Men to act in his Name, and has bestowed on Them, in a certain Sense, Authority to confer his Graces and Favours on Mankind, (as you rightly affirm, p. 27.), Such as the Apostles, and Prophets; and, when He has done so, has always taken care, that, those Persons, to whom He has ever granted so Considerable a Trust, shall be, at the same Time, Qualify'd for the executing of such a Charge, either by his Infallible and Inspiring Spirit residing in Them, or by immediately directing Them Himself, in the Disposal of those his Gifts and Graces; as this does not at all impeach his Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness: So, where He has not so Qualify'd Persons, as you must acknowledge He has not Qualify'd

the

the Christian Clergy; there, it is not to
liev'd, that He has Substituted such
qualify'd Persons, nor given Them such
authority, as his Lordship justly denies Them
for This is not only without any Founda-
tion in Scripture, and is contrary to the
Method of dealing with Mankind; but would
likewise impeach His Wisdom, Justice and
Goodness, by representing Him, as Intrud-
ing his Graces, and the Salvation of
Creatures depending thereupon, to Weak
Fallible, and often Bad Men. Such Auto-
cratic Administrations, are the only
Administrations of the Christian Clergy, which
His Lordship refuses Them; and the only Ones
which, tho' He does never call them Dreams
and Trifles, but only the supposed Uninter-
rupted Successions that were made necessary
to them, yet, as you describe them, they
might very justly have called for a more
wise. To repeat your own Words
(p. 27.) This, I hope, will be esteem'd
sufficient Confutation of your Doctrine, by
those who have any true Regard, or Zeal, for
Christian Religion, and only expect to be
restor'd by the Methods of Divine Grace, pre-
scribed in the Gospel; that, I have proved
your Doctrines, (besides their being False)
and wholly without Ground from Scripture
are Such, as, if They were founded in the
Gospel, would sufficiently confute the Gospel

self; and not the Gospel alone, but even
Possible Religion, or Regard to God in
World.

AFTER you have thus examined, re-
sented, and disproved his Lordship's
Reasons, in your own Way; you engage
(p. 27.) to set forth the Ecclesiastical
Character, as it is founded in the New Te-
stament. One would naturally have ex-
pected here some Passage out of the New
Testament, in support of the Idea of Priest-
hood, which you give us: especially One
which observes you so Free of Quotations,
of the Old Testament, when they serve
your Purpose much less, than a single Ex-
tra Text would do here. But the Rea-
son why you are so sparing in this, is very
evident; even because you can find None,
which, by any Misconstruction even, you
can force to your Side of the Argument;
which has the least Appearance of supporting
your Notion of the Christian Priesthood,
but, I hope, to produce to you several
express Texts of Scripture against a Notion,
which destroys the only true Christian
Priesthood, even the Priesthood, and Medi-
atorship, of our only Great High Priest,
and Mediator, Christ Jesus; and is destru-
ctive of the Design, and Institution of Chri-
stianity, as it supposes our Saviour's Mi-
nistry Ineffectual, and quite alters the Na-
me of It.

As

As you pretend to prove your Notion not from *Scripture*, which you reject this Dispute, (p. 31.) as *unnecessary*, from the *Nature of Priesthood*; I shall, before I examine more closely your Notion, Premise a few Things in General, about the *Nature of Priesthood*, and in Particular about *Christ's Peculiar Priesthood*.

This whole Matter is explained at length, in the 5th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Chapters of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. And, as I cannot but think, that *Priesthood* having no *Foundation in Nature*, but being a *Positive Institution of God*; the only way to judge of its *Nature* is, by considering what *It* is represented to be by the *Inspired Writers*; and not by the *Imaginations* of our own framing: I shall now take this *Method*, and consider how it is in *Scripture* describ'd.

The *Apostle* thus describes it: (*Heb. i. and viii. 3.*) *Every High Priest, He, taken from among Men, is ordain'd to Men in Things pertaining to God, that he may offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sin.* And, he adds, v. 4. *this Honour, (of Priesthood) no Man taketh to himself, but He that was call'd by God, as Aaron.* *Also Christ glorify'd not Himself to be an High-Priest; but he that said to Him, Thou art My Son, This Day have I begotten Thee.*

ee; saith likewise in another Place, Thou
 a Priest for ever after the Order of Mel-
 sedec. And v. 8. He goes on, Tho' He
 re a Son, yet learned He Obedience, by
 Things which He suffered: And being
 de perfect, (or rather, being consecrated,
 edis,) i. e. by his Death, He became the
 thor of Eternal Salvation unto all them
 t obey Him; Called of God, (or rather,
 claimed, ~~as a Priest~~) an High-Priest after
 Order of Melchisedec. By this Account
 the Apostle, and by all the Account of
 Institution of the Jewish Priesthood, in
 Books of Moses, it appears, that the
 Priesthood was appointed for the Expiating
 and Reconciling Men to God; that None
 could execute this Priesthood, but Those
 ed by God to that Office, and consecrated
 Him thereto.

When the Apostle had thus given us
 Notion of Priesthood in General; he
 t argues against the Aaronical Priest-
 in d, from the Imperfection of It, and the
 hat necessity that another Priest should arise after
 for Order of Melchisedec, (Heb. vii. 11.);
 r, then v. 12, that the Priesthood being
 self, aged, there is made of Necessity a Change
 on. the Law. And He reasons in the fol-
 be ing Verses of that Chapter, from a
 to Priest's being appointed, out of the
 beg of Juda, of which Tribe Moses spake
 nothing

nothing concerning Priesthood, in the Similitude of Melchisedec, made not after the Levitical of a Carnal Commandment, but after the Power of an Endless Life; (i. e. as he explains it, not to cease, or be transferred by Death, but to last for ever in One Person.) from this He reasons, I say, v. 1. *there is a Disannulment of the former Commandment, for the Weakness and Unprofitableness thereof. For the Law, says He, v. 19. made nothing Perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God.* Then he makes it a distinguishing Mark of the Excellency of Christ's Priesthood, that God made Him Priest with an Oath. And then, He goes on to show the Difference between the Jewish Priesthood, and That of Christ; and expressly places it in this; (which effectually destroys all your Notions of Christ's Priesthood;) that They truly were no Priests, because They were not suffered to continue by reason of Death: but that He, by Man (Christ) because he continueth ever, hath an Unchangeable Priesthood (i. e. both Firm and Lasting in its self, that passeth not in Succession from One to Another.) And He adds the Reason, therefore One must have more Efficacy than the Other, v. 25. &c. Wherefore, says He, He (Christ) is able to save them evermore to 1

come unto God by Him, seeing He ever
 hath to make Intercession for them: (He
 himself, and not Others, acting in his
 name, and called His Successors.) For such
 High Priest became Us, who is Holy,
 sinless, Undesiled, separate from Sinners,
 higher than the Heavens; who need-
 not daily, as Those High Priests, to offer
 Sacrifices, first for his own Sins, and then
 for the Peoples: for this He did once when
 offering up Himself. For the Law maketh
 High Priests, which have Infirmities;
 and the Word of the Oath, which was since
 beyond the Law, maketh the Son, who is
 consecrated for evermore.

The same kind of Reasoning runs
 through the three next Chapters.

In the 8th Chapter the Apostle tells us,
 of the Priests, and Gifts, and Offerings
 of the Law, were but Examples, and Sha-
 dows of Heavenly Things, v. 5.: and that
 Christ hath obtained a more Excellent Mini-
 stry, by how much He is the Mediator of a
 better Covenant, established on better Pro-
 mises, v. 6. By which He teaches us what
 Mediatorship means; and makes it to be the
 Office with Mediatorship. How that will
 answer to Those whom you call Christian
 Ministers, I leave you to judge.

The whole 9th and 10th Chapters are
 to support this Notion: that the Jewish
 Priest-

Priesthood was only a Type of That
 Christ ; or a Figure for the Time then
 sent ; that the Service of the Tabern
 could not make Perfect, as pertaining
 Conscience, Him that performed it ; it
 sisting only in Meats and Drinks, and
 vers Washings, and Carnal Ordinances, in
 sed till the Time of Reformation, (or set
 Things to Right :) but that Christ
 come an High Priest of Future good Things
 by a greater, and more Perfect Tabernacle
 not made with Hands, that is not of
 Building ; (not like this Jewish Temple
 Tabernacle ;) not by the Blood of Goats,
 Calves, but, by his own Blood, entered
 once into the Holy Place, having obtained
 (εισελθὼν) Eternal Redemption (or rather
 having found a Way to obtain Eternal
 redemption) for us. And the rest of
 Chapter is spent, in shewing ; that,
 the Jewish Priesthood was in all things
 Type of Christ's, yet It differed from
 in something, and came far short of
 For, tho', as in the Jewish Constitution
 the Priests, and Tabernacle, and Vessels
 the Service of It, were all Consecrated
 Purified by the Sprinkling of Blood
 Christ, of whom Their Priests were Types
 and His Body, of which the Tabernacle
 its Vessels, were the Types, was Consecrated,
 and Purified, in the same Manner,

God: Yet in this They differed, that the
 God, which purified Him, was not the
 God of Bulls and Goats, but his own
 God, which He offered up to God, thro'
 Eternal Spirit, without Spot; that It
 not only purify the Flesh of Those, on
 om it was sprinkled, but was to purge
 in Conscience from Dead Works, to serve
 Living God; that Christ entered not in-
 the Holy Places made with Hands, as the
 Jewish Priest did, which were only the Fi-
 gures of the True, but into Heaven it self,
 which was the True,) now to appear in
 Presence of God for us; and lastly, that
 was not to offer Himself often, as the
 Jewish Priest entered into the Holy Place, every
 year, with the Blood of Others, but was
 in the End of the World, to appear,
 to take away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself;
 Christ, having been once offered to bear
 Sins of many, should appear the Second
 time, unto Them that look for Him, without
 unto Salvation, (i. e. not with any
 Offerings for Sin, but only to save,
 and lead into His Glory, Those whom
 Father has given Him.
 In the 10th Chapter, the Apostle pursues
 the same Argument. He argues, v.
 1. that the Law having a Shadow of
 Things to come, and not the very I-
 mage, or Likeness of the Things, can never
 H with

with those Sacrifices, which They offer by Tear continually, make the Comers there Perfect. For then, adds He, would They have ceased to be offered, (as both the Sense of this Passage, and many Good Manuscripts, and Ancient Versions, direct us, either to read it; or else it must be understood, as in our Translation, to be an Interrogation, would They not have ceased to be offered?) Because that the Worshippers purified, should have no more Conscience of Sins. And He goes on, v. 4. For it is not possible that the Blood of Bulls, or of Goats should take away Sins: But, He, v. 10. (and He cites Passages from the Psalms to support it,) by the Offering of the Body of Jesus Christ, once for ever. And then, He repeats it in short, v. 12. Every Priest, says He, standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same Sacrifices, which can never take away Sins: this Man, after he had offered One Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down at the Right Hand of God. And He concludes, v. 13. Ec. For, by one Offering hath He perfected (or, consecrated, and dedicated to God) for ever them that are sanctify'd, (i. e. They that obey his Commands, depend upon his Promises and Assurances, and hope in the Grace, and Favour of God, thro'

ne: *Them*, who really, and sincerely
 ict themselves to the performing that
 vice, and Obedience to God, for which
 set them apart, and to which He Dedi-
 d them.) And this He confirms by the
 imony of the *Holy Ghost*, in the Prophe-
 of *Jeremiah*, (xxx. 33, 34.) ; where
 promises in the New Covenant He
 to make with them, to put his *Laws* in-
 their *Hearts*, and write them in their
 ds ; and to remember their *Sins* and *Ini-*
 For es no more : From which the *Apostle*
 lls, *cludes*, v. 18. *Now, where Remission of*
 t, is, there is no more Offering for Sin :
 s for we may well add, no more *Absoluti-*
 de of Them, or *Benedictions*, from Men,
 e O lary to place us in the *Favour* of God ;
 for our only *Mediator*, and the Only
 v. Priest over the *House of God*, (v. 21.)
 daily already procured for Us, on Certain
 ne Sa, which He himself has proposed to
 us : and which He Himself alone will
 Sac how we observe and perform, and
 e R our Conduct in that Matter, will
 s, v. Absolve, or Condemn Us. We
 perf therefore well conclude with the *A-*
 ro (v. 15. 20.) *Having therefore Bold-*
 e. T every One of us, who is a *Christian*,
 upon therefore not to be frighten'd with
 hope rrors, or Outcries, or *Vain Words* of
 thro to enter into the *Holiest*, by the
 al H 2 Blood

Blood of Jesus, (and not with any Intervention necessary from other Men,) by this New and Living Way, which He hath consecrated for us, thro' the Veil, that is to say, his Flesh : Let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled, or purified from an Evil Conscience, and our bodies washed with Pure Water. Let us confess the Profession of our Faith, without wavering, (for He is Faithful that promises) And let us not be driven from this, by trifling Pretences and Dreams of Men, or by Threatnings from them, or even real Mischiefs they may be at any time able to bring upon Us, for opposing the Enormous Claims, and defending our Lord's Prerogative, of being our Sole High Priest, and Mediator with his Father.

By this Time, I hope, we may conclude from what has been said, that in the Sense of Scripture, there have been no proper Christian Priests in the World, since Christ; who was Himself, and still continues to be, the Only Priest; and Mediator, whose Intervention is made necessary for our Salvation : And that no Christians are, or can be called, Priests ; unless in such a Figurative Sense, as that, in St. John (Rev. i. 6.) says, that Jesus hath made Us (all Christians equally

Distinction) *Kings, and Priests to his*
and Father; and in which *St. Peter,*
Epistle, ii 9.) Stiles Christians, a *Roy-*
Priesthood; but which implies no real
Priesthood, or Mediatorship, which I have
 own to be the same Thing.

This whole Matter is *Clear, and Plain*
 yond *Dispute,* to any One that searches,
 and endeavours to understand, the *Scrip-*
tures, especially in the *Original Languages,*
 which *They* were written. The *Mistake*
 th which, I fear, many confound them-
 ves, arises from our *English Version,*
 ich translates Two Greek Words, of ve-
 distant Significations, (*ἐπίσκοπος* and *ἱερεύς*.)
 the same Word, in our *Tongue, Priest*;
 ich *Word,* is indeed originally a Con-
 tion of *Presbyter,* and should only be
 when an *Elder of the Church,* is signi-
 ed; and not for *ἱερεύς,* which signifies
 properly a *Sacrificer, or Sacerdos in Latin.*
 his *Word* being used always, for the
Jewish Priests, who were *Real Sacrificers,*
 and *Mediators,* and being now commonly
 ed for the *Elders, or Ministers of the*
Church; many, I am afraid, hearing the same
 and, are led by that to think *Them* the
 ne *Thing.* This may seem, at first Sight,
 minute, and *Trivial Observation*; but, I
 perswaded, it will not appear so, to
 One, that considers what *Effect* the

Misuse of Words has always had, and has
Apprehensions of Things; how apt we
 to be carry'd away by *Sounds*, against
Design, and *Meaning* of them. This
 been very justly lamented, as the Occasion
 both of the *Beginning*, and *Perpetuation*
 of *Contention*, and *Wrangling*; whilst Men
 have been *Disputing*, without *Differing*,
 and heartily *Hating* one another, when
 they were at *Bottom* in the same *Opinion*,
 and have been made to *Combat* together
 like *Men* fighting in the *Dark*, neither
 knowing *whom* they *attack*, nor *what* they
aim at: and therefore, I think, there
 be no *Harm*, but may be a great deal
 of *Good*, in *Guarding*, and *Warning*
 People against being misled by such
Confusion and *Misuse of Terms*, as, if it
 not now be healed in *Language*, as it
 is in *Use*, yet should be always observed,
 watched, that so a *Conclusion*, drawn
 from the same *Sounds* in an *Argument*,
 in a *Different Sense*, in the *Different Place*
 of it, may not be stolen in upon us,
 made to pass for a *Good One*.

Having thus laid down, what appears
 to me, to be the *Scripture-Doctrine* of
Priesthood; and having, as I think, pro-
 ved from thence, that Our *Blessed*
viour is the *Only Priest* (or *high* or *Sacer-*
cer) of *God*, now in the *World*; that

an *End* to the *Jewish Priesthood*, which
 but an *Imperfect Shadow*, and *Type* of
 ; that *He*, as *He* was the *Last* in this
Maternal Office, so remains in it still,
 will remain in it, till the *Day*, when
 shall deliver up the *Kingdom* to his *Fa-*
 ; and that, therefore, *He* has not,
 cannot have any *Successors* in this *Of-*
 being *Himself a Priest* for ever after
Order of Melchisedec : I shall next take
 Consideration, (not what *Scripture*, for
 have offered none, and even affirmed
 to be *Unnecessary* towards *Determining*
Matter in Question, p. 31. but) what
Conings, or rather *Imaginations* and *In-*
ions of your own, you have opposed
 all this *Current*, and *Tenor* of *Scripture*,
 which, you now may see, is not against
 Lordship, but against your own *Ab-*
Notions; and which I have here laid
 order before your Eyes, that you may
 have no *Excuse* left, or *Possibility* of *Evasi-*
 without either *proving* Your *Assertions*
 or than hitherto you have done, or
 fairly acknowledging the *Truth*.
 grant to you, what you affirm, (p. 28.)
 all *Sacerdotal Power* is deriv'd from the
 Ghost, if you mean by it, all *Sacer-*
Power to *Expiate Sins* effectually,
 this *Limitation* the *Priesthood* of the
 will be excluded: since the *Blood* of

Bulls cannot take away Sin, as I have shewn before, but was only the Type of Sacrifice that could. The Promises annexed to the Observance of the Jewish Law, seem to be all only Temporal Blessings: And to cause a strict Performance of every Little of the Law was required by the Covenant with them, Do this, and Ye shall live; therefore such an Exactitude being almost Impracticable, They were allowed Priests, or Mediators, who were to atone by Sacrifices, for their Neglects, in the smaller Breach of the Law; for in the greater Sins, as Idolatry, Perjury, Breaking their Sabbath, Murder, Adultery, and False Witness, Dishonouring their Parents, there no Offerings, or Expiatory Sacrifices were allowed them; which might have showed plainly the Inability of their Law to restore them to the Grace and Favour of God, when once by any Grievous Sin they had lost it. But this Expiation for Sin was reserved to Christ, in whom God promised to Pardon all Sin whatsoever, upon True Repentance, or Change of Life. In this was the Mosaick Priesthood a Type of Christ's; that, as Those Priests by Sacrifices expiated the smaller Transgressions of the Law, and obtain'd God's Favour, and Temporal Blessings, for Those that came to the Terms of the Law, as to the

Commandments ; so Christ by his One Sa-
 crifice of Himself, thro' the Eternal Spirit,
 thro' the Holy Ghost, under whose
 Guidance and Direction, I own, He was
 living the Time of his Ministry, reconcil-
 ing us to God, expiated all our Sins whate-
 ver, and obtain'd the True Grace and
 Forgiveness of God, Eternal Life, for Those that
 should come up to the Terms of his Gospel ;
 on such Terms were, Repentance from Dead
 Sins, and Turning to, and Obeying the
 living God, with the Utmost Sincerity, and
 the Best Endeavours that we can use. I
 thank you, that Our Saviour took not the
 Ministry upon Him, till He was consecrat-
 ed to it, by the Holy Ghost ; nay, that
 by the Holy Spirit He gave Command-
 ments to the Apostles whom He had chosen,
 in many Instances before his Resurrection :
 and after that, He seems to have no longer
 been under that Guidance and Direction,
 for He Himself then All Power in Heaven
 and Earth ; and by that Power, of Him-
 self, Ordaining the Apostles to the Work of
 his Ministry, with which He entrusted
 them ; and, by the same Power, when
 He had given Them their Commission, As
 my Father hath sent me, even so send I you, to
 preach the Gospel, He enabled Them to execute it, He breathed
 His Spirit upon them, and said, Receive Ye the Holy Ghost,
 (John xx. 21, 22.) But that he made
 Them,

Them, by this *Commission*, or by giving
 Them the *Holy Spirit*, his *Proper Successors*, or *Priests* to *expiate*, and *Offer*
Sacrifice for *Sins*, (which you seem to take
 for granted, without *Pretence*, or *Colour*
 of *Proof*;) I have before shewn to be a
 great Mistake; by showing that Christ
 was the *Last*, the *Only*, and the *Unchangeable*
Priest of his *Father*, as well as the *Only*
 and *Only True Sacrifice* that was ever
 offered for *Sin*, by which the *Pardon* of
 was really, and effectually to be obtained.
 And consequently, the *Apostles* not being
True, and *Proper Priests*, They could not
ordain Others, after Them, to the same
Function, having no *Authority* so to do.
 Thus your *First Principle* being denied
 (which indeed is of it self sufficient to
 overthrow it, since you have not even
 pretended to give any *Proof* for it) all your
Argumentation, on the *Nature*, and *Succession*
 of the *Christian Priesthood*, for about
 Six Pages of your Letter, falls to the
Ground, and is sufficiently exploded.
 lest You, or any One else, should think
 neglect any thing *Material*, that you
 in them; I shall not think my Pains
 in following you thro' them all, and ex-
 amining every Thing that I can think
 seem to carry the least *Colour* of Reason
 with it; if I may be, by that Means

ways *Serviceable* towards the setting
the *Minds* of Good and Sincere *Christi-*
fer at True *Peace* and *Quiet* within, by
ing Them to this *Resting Place* of de-
Clinging on *Christ* alone for their *Eternal*
o *beatification*, and observing only those *Terms*,
Ch *He* Himself has proposed to them;
the delivering them from all the *Tu-*
ac *and Uneasiness* that your *Doctrines*
ver *necessarily raise within* their Breasts,
e of *withstanding* their most *sincere Endeav-*
tain to please *God*, and their living in
t be most perfect *Conformity* to the *Rules*
uld *the Gospel*.

ne *So* proceed therefore: 1st, The *Priest-*
to *was never to descend from Man to Man*,
deny 8.) and therefore no Men are *Conse-*
cient *ed to the Employment*, or have *Autho-*
r *to execute it*. Nor is It a *Grace of the*
all y *Ghost*, as you call It, but an *Office*
i *Sanctified by God*, for the *Pardon* of the
r ab *of Men*, and for their obtaining His
to *Grace and Favour*. This *Office* never pro-
d. *It* belonged to any, (not to the *Aara-*
thing *Priests*,) but to *Christ* alone; and in
you *single Person* It rests for ever, without
ains *Change or Succession*, as I have before
nd *God*. In this *Sense*, It is as *Positive* an
ink *Institution of God*, as the *Sacraments* are of
f *Revelation*. Nor have any *Men* upon Earth the
Me *Authority to alter the One Institution* more
than

than the *Other*; or, instead of the *Priesthood of Christ*, given Him by his *Father*, who made Him the *One Mediator* betwixt Him, and *Mortal Men*, to introduce a *New Order of Successive Priests*, pretended to derive their *Priesthood* from Him at the same Time, that they cannot deny to remain in Him, *Unchangeable, not to pass from One to Another*, but to continue in Him forever; and so to set up a *New Priesthood* in the Room of His, and not even like His; consisting, like That, which was abolished, as *Ineffectual, of many Priests, not supposed to continue by reason of Death*.

The only Thing that gives your Readers any Colour of Truth, is, often Changing the Terms; sometimes calling the *Order of Men*, whose Rights you pretend to be sending, the *Order of the Clergy*, or *Ministers of God*, and sometimes the *Priesthood*, and *Christian Priests*; by which would lead your Readers to think they are *Convertible Terms*, and stand for the same Thing: whereas no Two Things can be more distant. What *Priests* are, I have before sufficiently shown. But *Clergy* are *Ministers of God's Word*, are quite a distinct Thing; and are only appointed to teach, to exhort, to assist Others in the Performance of their Duty; not to intercede with God for them, as *Mediators*;

any other Way, than as any *Man* may
 precede, and pray for *Another*. This Or-
 der of the *Clergy* does not appear from
 Scripture to be a *Positive Institution*, (as
 affirm, p. 29.) in any Manner, as the
Sacraments were. The appointing of *El-*
ders by the *Holy Ghost's* immediate *Dire-*
ctions, to a *Church*, or *Congregation*; or by
Apostles, who had the *Infallible Spirit*,
 which was the same Thing; and Their
 directing Others to appoint *Elders* in the
several Cities, where *Christianity* prevail'd,
 is not a *sufficient Ground* to go upon, for
 changing the Order of the *Clergy*, a *Positive*
Institution of *Christ*; because it does not
 appear, that *Christ* gave any *Directions* a-
 bout that Matter; and because the *Apo-*
stles never mention it as *such*; but only as
 an *ecclesiastical, Proper, and Useful Office*;
 which represent It as being of the *Essence*
 of the *Visible Church of Christ*; and
 so, because it has been fully made
 so by the most *Learned Writers*, to be
 entirely taken from the *Model* of the *Jewish*
Synagogue, which, we are pretty sure, was
 of *Divine Institution*. And therefore,
 absurd soever (p. 29.) it may be to a-
 bandon, or depart from the *Settled Order* of
Clergy, and to make *New Orders*, with-
 out very *substantial Reasons*, forcing us
 to it; as that may interrupt *True Peace*,
 and

and Order, *Unity of Hearts, and Affection* among Christians, yet it cannot be absolutely condemned in all Cases; nor can it be maintained, that Christians may never depart from the *Order of the Clergy*, tho' upon never so Urgent Reasons; tho' to preserve, what the Bishop has shown to be, the only *Order, and Peace, and Unity of the Church of Christ*, and to oppose, what He has proved to be, the *True Disorder, and Disturbance, and Disunion of It*, when we are made to separate from our Only Head, Jesus, and set up new Heads to our selves in his Stead, and to disobey his *Laws, and Commands*, and minding only the *Commands of Men*, to hate, and persecute, and destroy one another; without condemning at the same time, the *Reformation from Popery*: and maintaining and taking up for our selves every *Absurdity*, which we follow all our *Disputes with Them*, so justly against them with; and without incurring any *Condemnation*, that We deprive Christ of his *sole Mediatorship*, and set up Others in his Place, who are to obtain *Salvation* for us, and whose *Intervention* we make necessary to It, and Affront God, in imagining Him to be so Cruel, as to suffer His *Eternal Happiness* to depend on the *Accusations, and Passions, of Frail, and Fallible Men*, like our selves,

You go on, (p. 29.) and ask, *Why may*
not alter the *Scriptures*, as well as the
Priesthood, having the *Authority* of the
Ghost for both equally? I own You
 alter One, as little as the Other. And
 before I contend that *Christ* being
 Only *Priest*, whom we are taught in
 the *Holy Scriptures* to depend upon for
Salvation; We have no *Authority* to alter
 the *Priesthood*, and to set up to Our selves
 another One of our own, passing from One to
 another by *Succession*. But then, at the
 end of the *Paragraph*, you change again
 your terms; and ask, *Why may we not make*
a Gospel, as well as a *New Order of*
Clergy? Which is nothing to the Pur-
 pose, it being deny'd, that the *Order of*
Clergy is a *Positive Institution* of
Christ; tho' it may be approved by Him,
 as a *Method*, and *Order*, very *Beneficial* to
 His *Followers*, when not abused by Those,
 who are only such in Name, and not in
 Substance. Your *Conclusion* (p. 29.) that there
 must be a *strict Succession of Authorized Or-*
ders from the *Apostolical Times*, in order
 to constitute a *Christian Priest*, is nothing
 to the *Question*, it having been proved, that
 there is no *Christian Priest*, or *Mediator*,
 between *Christ*. Nor will changing the Word
Priest, according to Custom, into *Mini-*
ster (p. 30.) at all avail you, unless you
 can

can prove, from the *Nature* of the *Apostle*, and not of the *Priesthood*, that a *Succession* is necessary to *Authorize* too. They have no direct *Authority* or *Commission* from the *Holy Ghost* to *duce*; and, if *He* may be said to *Authorize* Them, it is only, as the *Roman Emperor* and his *Proconsuls* are called by *St. Paul* (*Rom. xiii. 2.*) the *Ordinance* of *God*, because *God* approves of an *Institution* Beneficial to *Mankind*, tho' it be of *His* own *Appointing*, and *Choosing*; and therefore *St. Peter* (*1 Epist. ii. 13.*) describes the *Ordinance* of *Man*. So the *Order* of *Ministers* of *God's Word* being for the *Instruction* and *Edification* of *Christians*, as long as They themselves serve that *End*, and not their own *Ambition*, and *Covetousness*, is certainly approved of by the *Holy Spirit*, and in that *Sense* may be called *His Ordinance*. But no *Necessity* of *Uninterrupted Successions* of *lawful Ordinances* can be deduced out from *This*; or from any thing, but from the *Express Command* of *Christ*, or the *Holy Spirit*.

To his *Lordship's Reasoning*, from the *Uncertainty* of *Successions*, that *God* cannot hang out *Salvation* on such *Niceties*, is an answer (*p. 30.*) (and the *Application* is very easy), by fixing, tho' unfairly, the same *Uncertainty* on the *Scriptures*, which

is neither Fairly dealing with the
 atures, nor at all to the Present Point.
 ist, it was not necessary, that the seve-
 Copies, and Manuscripts, thro' which the
 atures have been Transmitted thro' dif-
 Ages, and Languages, should be all
 Ones, and none of Them forged: for it
 not actually True that They are so.
 can have no Proof of these Writings,
 the same, that we have of any other
 of ent Book, transmitted thro' many Co-
 and different Ages: for to appeal to
) Scriptures, for the Proof of themselves,
 r having mentioned themselves, is Absurd
 the best Sight; tho' such *Intrinsic* Proofs,
 lon Marks, as are to be found in all Anti-
 and Books, are not Ridiculous, but perhaps
 ness of the best Arguments for the Anti-
 y S, and Authentickness of any Book. But
 tis and this *Intrinsic* Proof, is not of it
 ern sufficient Authority; especially when so
 be depends upon it, and where that
 , is supposed to contain a *Rule of Faith*
 lies. But then such *Rational* Proof, as
 ways esteemed sufficient to support
 from Authority of any other such Book, joyn-
 con with these *Intrinsic* Arguments; are
 ies Satisfactory to any Reasonable Man,
 cat sufficient to determine his Belief, and
 ily practise subsequent to It. Such is the
 et. which we have of the Writings of
 I the

the *New Testament*. And the *Variety* of *Copies*, and *Versions*, together with the *considerable Variations*, (wonderfully Inconsiderable in Comparison of their Number) make the *Extrinsic Argument* stronger in Favour of that Book, than of Others. From this State of the *Scriptures* it follows indeed, that our *Faith* is not to be built upon *Single Texts* of *Scripture*, because *They* may have been corrupted, tho' we have no *Manuscript* to point out to us that *Other Manuscripts* have been corrupted in those *Passages*: but on which we see to be the *Doctrine*, and *sign* of the whole *Book*, and which is mentioned in one *Place* alone, but also where-ever *It* is professedly giving account, of what *Christ* commanded the *Apostles* to preach as *His Religion*, and *They* accordingly preached, as the *Foundamentals* of *It*.

But, 2dly, it does not follow that, because this *Book* is, as all Books of *Human Nature* are, that go into many *Hands* and are frequently transcribed, and be kept in the *Hands* of *Men*, who sometimes *Corrupt Passages* in it; and because this *Book*, which is the *Only* to *Christians* for *Faith* and *Practice*, be proved to *Us*, as *other Books* are, before we are to receive it as *such*: then

practice, which, if it were a *necessary*
 should be well founded on, and even
 tion'd in this *Rule*; and which is not
 a *Book*, that cannot be corrupted, but
 will be probably discovered by other
 es; but depends on a Thousand *Incer-*
ptions, and *Proofs*, which can never be
 shed to us; is to be received, without
Proof from this *Rule*, or being menti-
 in *It*, upon a *Bare Pretence* too,
 out any *Proof* even of that *That*, that
dition equally supports both the *Rule*,
 this *Practice*. This is the *Case* of
ssions, and this is all your *Argument*
 their *Necessity*: After all your Promi-
 (p. 27.) of setting forth the *Sacredness*
 the *Ecclesiastical Character*, as it is foun-
 the *New Testament*. But I must tell
Written Tradition, we know by Ex-
 ence is much better kept than *Oral*; I
 of *None*, but your self, and the
 s, whom we are continually arguing
 on that very *Topick*, that ever
 to the *Oral*. They indeed, find-
 their *Enormous Claims* not to be sup-
 by *Scripture*, fly to this *Dark Shel-*
 out of which too They are quickly
 in: but for *Protestants* to use the *Sup-*
 that can only serve *Popery*, is, I
 very *Absurd*; at least, till They have
 fairly renounc'd *Protestantism*. But, if

you will take this *Liberty* of mainte
Contradictions, I think, you should at
 bring something like *Proof* for what
 affirm; and not leave us in the Dar
 to that too; and only reason obs
 from the *Nature* of quite a *different*
 from what we are speaking about, I
 the *Priesthood*, to the *Nature* of the
 in *Debate*, i. e. to the *Nature* of the
stry, and of the *Order of Clergy*. Th
on, and especially *Oral Tradition*, c
 ver be a good *Proof* of this Matter,
 tisfy the Minds of Men now, that
 has been any such *Uninterrupted Su*
of Clergy, from the *Apostolical*
 down to *Ours*. For, according
Principles which the *Bishop of Ba*
 writing against, even *Books*, or the
Lasting Parchments, could scarce eve
 ascertain'd it to us: for it d
 on so many *Niceties* in *Baptism*, a
etical Orders, that one small *Error*
 in at any Time, may by this Time
 leavened the whole Lump. If any On
 afterwards *Ordained* many *Others*, h
 ed Himself to have been, either B
 or *Ordained*, by such *Hereticks*, a
 of the *Antient Gnosticks* were, who
tism, and *Ordination* was esteeme
 or by *Schismaticks*, whose *Baptism*,
 as *Orders*, some of the most conf

ers among you, deny to be *Valid*; or
 one who had forged his *Orders*, and
 received Them *Regularly* from a Bi-
 shop, or from a False *Bishop*; or by any
 who had any of the foregoing Defects
 his own *Baptism*, or Ordination again,
 had been *Baptized* or *Ordained* by Others
 had; and so tracing it continually
 backwards, till we can reach the Fountain
 ; without coming at which Course,
 can never arrive at any True Satisfac-
 tion, and Peace of Mind; on the *Suppositi-*
 mean, that the *Intervention* of such
 Interrupted Successors, is *Necessary* to our
 al tion. These are not such small In-
 g nities, as all humane Things are sub-
 ject to, and which do not take away Mo-
 rality, and such a Degree of Affir-
 mation as is sufficient to determine Us in
 our Actions; and are not such Chances as
 are preserved in many distinct Copies
 many Ages, are liable to: but Things
 of a Dark Nature, that We can never
 have any Moral Certitude about them; and
 that, if we think of them, and
 think them necessary to our Salvation, must
 sink us into Despair, or drive us in-
 to Religion, and destroy within us all
 Love, and Reverence to God.

Our last Argument (p. 31.) for this
 Interrupted Succession, is this: The Cler-

gy, you say, have a Commission from Holy Ghost: The Power of conferring Commission of the Holy Ghost, was left the Apostles. Therefore (this is the conclusion) the Present Clergy cannot the same Commission, but from an Ordained Men, who have successively conveyed Power from the Apostles to the present Clergy. This has the Air of a Syllogism. But happily it is a very Bad One. For, supposing (but not granting,) that the Clergy have a Commission from the Holy Ghost; the Syllogism is Inconclusive: for there is more in the Conclusion, than there is in the Premises. To have been Right, it should have been thus: The Clergy have a Commission from the Holy Ghost: The Power of conferring this Commission was left with the Apostles: ergo, the Present Clergy cannot have received their Commission, but some way or other from the Apostles. But that can only be by Succession in an Ordained Men, requires better Proof, than being merely clapped at the End of a Syllogism where it had no Room. It may be proved by other Ways. The Apostles may have been authorized, (tho' I cannot find they thought it needful even to do that, the Nature of the Thing it self authorising) all Churches, or Congregations to appoint Ministers, and Bishops to

s, so as should seem to them most
 their *Edification*. The *Apostles* appointed
 indeed themselves in many *Church-*
 out that *They* gave them a *Power* to
 int *Others* again, does not appear.
 tho' *Timothy*, and *Titus*, were sent
 t. *Paul* on that *Errand*, it does not
 or that *They* had any *Power* given
 a to confer of themselves again the
Power to *Others* after *Them*. The
 tive *Practice* was, for the *Congregati-*
Church to chuse, and for the *Bishop*,
Presbyters, to lay their *Hands* on the
 s *Chosen*, and to pray for the *Holy*
 to assist *Them* in the *Exercise* of
 Office, which they were chosen to.
 ere seems to have been no *Apostoli-*
 command for this *Method*, which grew
 quite altered in *Time*; but it rather
 that it was left to the *Discretion* of
 Particular *Church*, or *Congregation* of
 ans: tho' I confess, That *Particular*
 d, which we observe the *Apostles*
 selves to have fixed upon, seems to
 far the most *Eligible*. But however
 matter be; I am certain, there is not
 Word, in the *New Testament*, of a
 gular *Uninterrupted Successions*, or a
 g like the *Necessity* of them to be
 implied; which you should have
 there was, before you positively

laid down your Conclusion, and left
great a Gap in your Syllogism.

But the whole Argument is ill-founded.
For the Clergy have not, properly speaking, a Commission from the Holy Ghost, which you make, what They call the Major Proposition of the Syllogism, is strictly True; nor have you produced a single Text of Scripture, or a single Argument from any thing else, to support it. You think it perhaps so Self evident, that it stood in need of no Proof; but I shall make bold to deny it You, and to set you on the Proof. For, tho' you find the Holy Ghost, in the first Times of Christianity, appointed Some to be Overseers of the Flock, directing the Church, or commanding to separate Some to the Work, unto He had called them, (Acts xiii.) tho' such Persons, so called immediate Commission from the Holy Spirit, may be said to have a Commission from Him, strictly speaking, nay, tho' it may be own'd, that the Maintenance of the Clergy be, in some Sense, of Ordinance of the Holy Ghost, (as Magistrates, which is an Ordinance of Men, is likewise an Ordinance of God,) the Holy Ghost, (in proving of it, as far as it is made manifest, and Beneficial to Christianity, and all of you Good, and Sincere Men, in the Execution of this Office, tho' they are appointed as, a

Men: yet all this amounts to no Proof, He gave an Express Commission for Establishing an Order of Men, to manage Religion, in a Succession to the End of the World. If the Holy Ghost, had intended all thing like this; it is Incredible, that a Direct Command to this Effect, should have been no where Recorded in Scripture; especially if the Intervention of such an Order, was to be so necessary to our Salvation, as you would make it; considering that all Things necessary to Salvation, are so clearly, and frequently, contained in Scripture. Nothing can shake this Argument, but proving that there is some such Direct, and Express, Declaration in Scripture. Till then, all your Fine Reasoning on the Nature of the Priesthood, which we have shown, has no Relation to this Order of the Clergy, and is all mere Imagination, or Invention of your own Head, will in the least avail you.

When you have thus passed over the Sense of your Assertions, you go on, (p. 12) to explain what you mean by Authoritative Benedictions. You say, you do not know, (what no Body accuses you of denying,) a Natural and Intrinsic Authority of your own: but a Commission from God, to perform the Effectual Administrations of his Ordained Offices, and to bless in his Name: as a Prophet

phet sent from God, who has no Natural Power to know of Himself, what He foretells or to execute the Judgments He Denounces: yet is an Authoritative Prophet. To make this Parallel good, you must either prove that the Clergy are all Prophets, and know what Particular Persons God will Bless, or will not Bless; or prove that They have a Commission from Him to Bless in his Name without knowing whether He will Bless Those whom They Bless, or not: or prove on their own, that whatever Commission they have from God, it is only to Bless, in General, and Conditionally, all that obey his Commands, and comply with the Terms of his Faith and Grace, and to pray to Him for success, and that the Salvation of Men does not at all depend on such their Blessings, but on the Obedience, which makes them worthy of God's Blessing, and makes them worthy of Acceptance with Him. If you could produce such an Express Commission, as this (which you have not done, and cannot do,) from God, to the Clergy, yet it would not at all contradict the Bishop who never speaks about such a One; but is always speaking of a quite different One, set up amongst Us, which the Goodness and Mercy of God, is made to hang upon.

(P. 31.) Is spent in repeating only, what you have said before, and what I had

answered: Only I shall observe to
 that when you there speak of a *False*
Commissioned Minister, not being able to
 administer a *True Sacrament*, you leave
 Question, which is, who is the *True*
Minister? And take for granted, what you
 should have proved. You should have
 us, what *Minister*, *Christ* or his *Apo-*
appointed to *Administer* the *Lord's*
Supper: and shown us that *Baptism* was
 confined to the *Apostles*, and *Those* to
 whom *They* delegated the *Power of Bap-*
tism; and that it was not more the *A-*
ction, and *Publick Profession* of the *Person*
Baptized, than of *Him*, who performed
 the *Ceremony of Dipping Him in Water*;
 it was not more the *Answer of a Good*
Conscience, by the *Person Immersed*, than
 the *Putting away the Filth of the Flesh*, by
 the *Minister*, thro' the *Intervention* of a *Mini-*
ster, that *Saves Us*, and is the *True Bap-*
tism, availing *Us* towards obtaining the *Fa-*
vor and Mercy of God. These Things I say,
 I thought to have considered before you
 so positively declared your *Sense* of that
 Matter; and this I now leave with you to
 consider, and explain to us, if you please.
 (P. 34.) You tell Us, that when the *Bi-*
shop or Priest interceeds for the Congregati-
on and pronounces the *APOSTOLICAL*
Benedictions upon them, this is not barely
 an

an Act of Charity, and Humanity of a Christian praying for another, but is the Work of a Person Commissioned by God to bless in his Name, and be Effectually Ministerial in the conveying of his Graces. What you mean by APOSTOLICAL Benedictions, I know not; unless you mean Benedictions pronounced in the Words of an Apostle, i. e. only repeating the General Declarations of an Apostle. This any Man may do to others, as well as pray for Them. The Bishop, or Priest, (i. e. Presbyter) may only do it in the Name of the whole Church, or Congregation, by whom He is understood to be appointed for that purpose, and whose Mouth He is made to speak. That they have an express Commission from God, to do this, we deny: Or that the Benediction is effectual, so as that the Grace of God constantly accompanies it, or that it cannot be obtained without it; and it lies upon you to prove it.

But, what you say next, that They are left us in Christ's stead, to carry on his good Design of saving us, I utterly deny; I cannot but look upon it, as what would be an Impious, and Blasphemous Claim for them to be Mediators in His stead; who is our Mediator, and shall remain to the End, our Mediator, and High Priest with his Father. That They may, in His Name

use, carry on his great Design of saving
 I own; as all Good Men may, by
 exciting others to obey Him; and in no
 Manner. But then, you your self give up
 His Cause, when you conclude; *Whose*
edictions are ever ratified in Heaven, but
When we render our selves, in one Respect or
another, incapable of them: i. e. whose Bene-
dictions are ever ratified, when They are
in misery; (a very True, and Identick Pro-
position!); and are only Ratified, when
they become Needless, the Persons, whom
they Bless, being already Blessed in Hea-
ven, before They pass any Sentence upon
at them. But then, how are Their Benedic-
tion necessary to our Salvation? how can He
depend upon Them? unless you accuse
at Him of this Inequality in His Dealings with
the Good; that He has so ordered it, that Sal-
vation cannot be obtained without Them,
lied yet They may be obtained without Sal-
vation following Them: Whereas it would
They far less Inconsistent with the Goodness of
His God, to suppose He allowed such Means to
gain Salvation for us, tho' not to with-
stand It. But, as neither of these Doctrines
claim founded on the Gospel, we ought to
is not content to place our Salvation, only
where God has placed it; on our Obedi-
ence to Him, and Compliance with the
in Him which He has proposed in the Go-
spel

spel of his Son; and not on these *Words*, and *Trifling Dreams* of Men.

But to justify *Those* of the Clergy, put in this *Enormous Claim*, (p. 14.) I say, you are no more contending for *yourselves*, in this *Doctrine*, than when you are upon any *Article* in the *Creed*. No — Have We so lost all *Memory* of *Popery*, we cannot see from what all the *Wealth* and *Dominion* of *Their Clergy* arose. Was it, but these *Doctrines*; that their *Intervention* was *Necessary* to Men's *Salvation*; that their *Benedictions*, and *Absolutions*, were the *Keys* of the *Kingdom* of *Heaven*; that by *Them* They could *Open*, *Shut*, *Bind* or *Loose*, as seemed good in *Their Eyes*; and that all their *Resolutions* and *Decrees* were ratified above: Was it, I say, but these *Doctrines*, imposition on *Weak Christians* in the *Dark Ages* of the *Church*, that first *Insensibly*, and at last *Sensibly* and *Speedily*, drew into *Their Hands* all the *Power*, and *Grandeur*, *Government* of the *World*, and into *Their Treasures* all its *Wealth*, and *Riches*: That were indeed something *Modest*, than *Those* among us seem to be; and pretended to be immediately by *Their own Powers*, (They may call it, tho' They pretended They have been given Them,) to the *Dispersal* of a *New Seat* of *Torment*, which Punish

mented for that *Purpose*, and which
 is called *Purgatory*, to endure only for
 a *Season*. And as to *Eternal Salvation*,
 they allowed it to be *Accessible* by *Chri-*
stian *Prayers*, even without the *Intervention* of
any *Benedictions*, and *Absolutions*; tho'
 they endeavoured to make the *Terms* of
 it appear so hard, that *None* should at-
 tempt the *Approach* to It without *Them*.
 Withall this, and tho' I have shown
 the *Temporal Advantages* some particular
Schools of *Clergy* have made of these *High*
Absolutions: yet I own at the same Time,
 of *This* is not Their *True Interest*; as no
Openness, or *Wickedness* is the *True Interest*
 of any *Man*, whatever *Temporal Pleasures*
 they may obtain thereby. I own with you,
 (Viz.), that, if *They* pretend to a *False*
Impression, whatever *Present* and *Appa-*
rent *Benefit* They may receive by it; if
 it *seemeth* to be thought, not *Ministers* of
 God for the sake of the People committed
 to their Charge, as you would represent
 them to be *Lords*, and *Masters* over *God's* *He-*
irats; but for *their own Sakes*, as it really is
 than. They make these *Enormous Claims*:
 I own, and greatly Fear, in this
 world, *They will*, tho' not perhaps *Only*, yet
They *suffer*; and will *bear*, tho' not the
Displeasure, yet the *greatest* and *se-*
verest *Punishments*; if *They* do it through
 in *Design*,

Design, or Covetousness, or Ambition
 if through *Ignorance, and Weakness*, or
 away by Others, I hope, that God, in
Infinite Mercy, will take *Compassion* on
Infirmities and Disadvantages, as He
 suffered sometimes *Those*, who since
 desire to serve and please Him, to
 under. I said, They would not suffe
lone perhaps, or bear *singly* the Pu
 ment: because I cannot but greatly
 from all that I have ever observed
 such *Blind Votaries*, that, when by
Artifice of Men they are Misled into
 a *Groundless Dependance* on Others,
 pretend to deal out their *Infalible Re*
 for *Salvation*, very different from what
Saviour has made the only *Means* to
 They are, at the same Time, either
 ried away from the *Only Terms* on
 the *Gospel* has promised that *Salvation*
 such *Vain Hopes*; or driven away
 them by as *Vain Fears*, with which
 possess'd them: I fear, I say, it w
 found, that they who thus *Throw u*
Salvation into the *Hands* of other M
 Themselves, and hope to obtain
 Their *Means*, without performing w
 required by God and Christ of Them
 not of Others for them; *trust*, (as th
phet said in a like Case, where Men
 in what God would not have them

in a broken Reed, whereon if a Man
it will go into his Hand, and pierce
But, I am persuaded, that Those who
wingly beguile Others into this False
dence, or False Fear, will have the
ter Condemnation of the Two.

our Two next Pages are only employ-
drawing a Parallel between his Lord-
and an Author, whom you make as
as you can, to raise the greater
on his Lordship, for agreeing with
in any thing. You might have re-
red, that the Bishop, some Years ago,
ly allotted a considerable Part of a
which He writ to justify *Episcopal*
tion, to the Refuting many things He
proved in that Author's Book; and par-
ly that Part of it which He thought
the Usefulness of an Order of the
; and maintained the Argument for
an Order, taken from the Example of
ostles, and the most Primitive Church.
his Lordship agrees with that Au-
in any thing in which that Author is
Right, it is no Reproach to Him, or
Man else; as it is none to agree
any Man, or Author, in what is True
ight. But this being foreign to the
the Question not being, what any
lar Person has maintained; but what
th, and what ought to be main-

K

tained:

tained: I shall pass on to your following Reasonings.

His Lordship owns, that He is not against the Order, Decency, and Subordination belonging to Christian Societies. Answer to this, you ask (p. 37.); Is any Christian Law, that obliges us to serve this kind of Order? Is it a Sin for any Body, especially the Christian Magistrate to leave this Order, and make what Order he prefers to it? If you mention Christian Law for any Particular sort of Order; (as you do, for you explain yourself so below;) I answer, there is no such Law. But that *All Things should be done Decently and in Order, and to Edification*, that is an Express Precept given by St. Paul (1 Cor. xiv. 40.) Whether you will call this a Precept of St. Paul's to be a Christian Law, or not, I do not know: but there is, there is a plain Christian Law for maintaining Order and Decency in the Worship of God: And if it is not, I know of no other Christian Law for it; unless it is understood to be included in that General Law of Charity given by Christ, which obliges us to do whatever is for the Good and Edification of our Brethren.

But if it is no Absurdity, as you represent it, that Order is necessary, yet no particular Species of it is so:

e may be many different *Species* of *It*
 ally Good, and equally maintain-
 Order and Decency: as in the Case of
 Government, tho' *It*, in a manner,
 necessary to the Maintaining the Order,
 Peace, and Happiness of Mankind in
 Is; yet, it cannot be thence inferred,
 any one Particular Form or Species
 is so; there being Many that may be
 ly Good for that End, and equally
 ctive of that Order, Peace, and Hap-
 me, for which alone Government is at all
 sary. I confess, when any Visible
 ch, or Congregation of Christians, have
 made a Christian Law, for that They
 no Power to do, but) agreed upon
 Particular Order, for their own Edi-
 on: it is then a Sin, (not against any
 made by that Agreement, for such
 can be none properly speaking) but
 st the great Law of Peace, and Cha-
 to leave that Order, and make Other
 Ones; without very Weighty Reasons,
 as drive Them to the Choice, whe-
 They will adhere to Christ, or to Men;
 least, without being fully persuaded,
 Sincerity of their Hearts, that They
 such Reasons. Such were the Weighty
 ns, which forced Our Reformers to leave
 Orders of Men, who opposed those of
 Him only: and
 K 2 such,

such, *Others* again may be sincerely
 swayed They have, to leave the
 of Those, who Themselves had before
 the *Orders* and *Subordinations* of the
 rupted Church of Rome. But, as We
 not the *Judges* of *Men's Hearts*; as
 only belongs to God, and to Christ,
 He has appointed to be their *Judge*.
 We ought not to take upon us to
 mine the *Sincerity* of *Those* who
 any Time *separate* Themselves from
 and make new *Orders* of their own
 much less ought we to *persecute*,
 ways *injure* them on that Account.
 this would be, merely for the
Outward Order, and *Decency*, (which
 of equal Importance with the great
 of Religion,) to introduce the most
Disorder, and *Indecency* into the Church
 Christ: A *Practice*, which destroys the
honour of Christianity, by making
 and *Inhumanity* the *Support* of It;
 breaks, and dissolves all the *Bands*
rity and *Mutual Love*; and which
 have no other *Effect*, if it succeed
 to force *Men*, by the *Terrors* and
 of this *World*, to wound their own
ences, *insincerely* to profess what they
 not believe, to *practice* what they
sinful, and certainly to incur the
sure and *Anger* of *Almighty God*.

Accusation is Unjust, that his Lord-
 ship, tho' He does not disclaim all External
 Order and Decency Himself, yet has taught
 his People to do it, if they please, and as
 they please: since He only has
 taught, (what ought always to be taught,
 insisted upon, by Those that have a
 Concern for Christianity,) that They
 should not disclaim, and are justified in dis-
 missing, all such Pretended Order, and
 Decency, as either does, or as They are
 fully and sincerely perswaded does, de-
 stroy the very Vitals of the Christian Re-
 ligion, and introduces the most Real and
 fatal Fatal Disorder and Indecency into
 the Church of Christ; and such, as if They
 would adhere to, forsaking Christ, They
 would most certainly incur the Displea-
 sure and Vengeance of God.

If any Layman pretended to Ordain, in
 the Diocese of Bangor, as you put the Case,
 (p. 38.), such Ordination would entitle the
 person so ordained, to no Office in our
 Church; and therefore the Bishop would
 need no Occasion to give Himself any
 trouble about it. But if He set up a
 distinct Church, or Congregation, from
 the already settled there; the Bishop
 could accuse him of no Sin, unless He
 could show Him, that He neither had,
 nor could sincerely think He had, good

Reasons for so doing. If the Bishop should do this, then it would be Time, to accuse Him of a *Sin*; which *Sin* would be a *Transgression* of the *Law of Peace* and *Charity*, and of no *Other*. But as I am perswaded his Lordship has too great a *Sense of Christianity*, to pretend to win the *Hearts of Men*: so, I see nothing left for Him to do, but to endeavour to perswade such a *One*, of the weak Ground of his *Separation*; and, if He could do that, to go no farther, but leave Him to be *Censured*, or *Approved*, by the *All-Knowing* and *All-Wise Judge*. But if He should reprove, such a *One*, (as I suppose him doing) in a *Matter of Conscience* and *Religion*, as an *Englishman*, acting in *Opposition to the English Laws*, or any *humane Laws*, properly so called, I shall never believe. For *That* would be equally *Good* and *convincing Arguments* to a *Jew* in *Christ's Time*, when He was going to change their *Established Religion* to a *Papist* now in *France* or *Italy*; or to a *Heathen* in *Turkey*; or to a *Heathen* in *Countries* where *Heathenism* prevails, as it is to an *Englishman* in *England*. Such a *Way of Arguing* would be only paralleled by that *Unchristian*, and *Atheistical*, *Advice*, (which a *Divine* or *Church* could mention without *Abhorrence*).

to Augustus, to be allways of the *Estab-*
lished Religion of his Country, how True,
 how False forever it was. Such a *Max-*
 im would divest *Christianity* of all Advan-
 ce, but what was *Accidental*, and Com-
 ing to it with the *Worst* and *Faldest* Reli-
 gion; would have closed up the Way to
 all com ever entering into the *World*, as be-
 ing contrary to all *Establishments* that
 were then in *Being*; which would con-
 found all past *Reformation of Corruptions*,
 and effectually preclude *It*, where it has
 not yet been made; and lastly, which
 by would so raise, or depress *All Religion*, to
 the same *Value*, that *They* would be all e-
 qually *Ineffectual* to the *Great*, and *Only*
 of *All Religion*.

Therefore I conclude this *Head of Benedi-*
 ctine, I shall take notice of *One Argument*
 which brings, (and which is your finishing
 stroke on this *Subject*,) to prove that
Particular Sort of Clergy is necessary.
 He says you (p. 39.), *To say that no Particu-*
lar Sort of Clergy is necessary, and yet in
all the Clergy are necessary, is the same
to say that Truth (that is, All Truth)
is necessary to be believed, yet the Belief of
Particular Truth is necessary. But to
 say that *all Truth is to be believed*, is to say
 that *every Particular Truth is to be belie-*
 ved for *All Truth includes Every Particular*

Truth. But to say that in General
 Clergy (not All Clergy, as it should
 been to make the Comparison just,
 the having some Clergy) is necessary,
 to say, every Particular Clergy is necessary
 for some Clergy does not include a
 Particular Sort of Clergy. This Sort
 is much the same with that employed
 overturn all Religion, and to establish
 and Necessity in its Place: "All Ad-
 " say the Fatalists, are Necessarily, de-
 " to be done, or not to be done, the
 " fore all Actions are Necessary; for Me-
 " Absurd to say, of Two Things, that
 " of them is Necessary, and yet that it;
 " ther of them is so." The Fallacy lies
 the same Place where Yours does: for
 does not follow, from the Necessity
 is, that an Action should be done, or
 done, that One Particular Choice is ne-
 rily determined; (for then it would be
 Necessary to do This, or That, but not
 This only; which is the Thing to be de-
 ved, and till then not to be used as a
 Argument to prove it;) but only that
 Alternative is necessary; not that This
 Necessary; but that to do either This
 That is Necessary: which Necessity arises
 from No Cause, but from the Nature
 Things, and the Necessary Truth of this
 position, That Every Thing must be, or

which *Proposition* does not suppose, or the *Thing Actually* either to be, or to be; but only affirms, that it must be of the *Two*, either be, or not be.

Thus I have followed you, through your *Particular*, of *Benedictions*; and shown how much You have in *Many Places* presented his Lordship's *Notions*; how you have answered his *True Ones*; and *Adversive* your *Own* are of The *Principles* and *Institutions* of *Christianity*; divesting *Christ* of his sole *Priesthood*, for *Mediatorship*, and placing it in the hands of *Men*, who have nothing to do with it; and by Claiming *Authorities* for the *Clergy*, for which you have no *Proof*, or *Foundation*. I am far from accusing You, for doing all this with *Design*; nay, I have shown you, where you contradict your self, and overthrow again what you had been setting up, I suppose, without perceiving it. I do not charge you with the *Consequences* of your *Doctrine*, that you may see, and perhaps would abhor if you saw. But I must charge your *Doctrines* themselves with these *Consequences*, which, I have shown you, follow necessarily from them; and which may mislead many Good Sincere Christians, who will not perceive your *Inconsistency* with your own, but may be carried away by the

Main

Main Drift of your Reasoning, by the sign you avow, and by what you pretend to have proved, to Principles directly opposite to Those of Christ's Religion, delivered to us in the Scriptures; and may they by plunge themselves either into Despair or suffer Themselves to be laid Asleep in a Groundless Confidence, in what the Specter has not made the Terms of Acceptance with God; and so may finally, through such Fatal Mistakes, miss of the Goal End of all our Hopes, and Endeavour even Eternal Salvation. I come now to consider your Second Head.



S E C T. II.

Of humane Authoritative Absolution

HIS Lordship disproves the Pretentious Claim to an Authoritative Absolution, by the same Argument which he had before used against that of Authoritative Benedictions. *An Infallible Absolution, he says, cannot belong to Fallible Men. No Absolution can be Authoritative, which is not Infallible. Therefore No Authoritative Absolution can belong to any Man living;*

the *Reason*, which you think fit
 it, because *No Absolution*, which is
 certainly to be depended upon, can be Au-
 thorative, and None can be certainly de-
 pended upon, which is not *Infallible*. (p. 92.)
 the Bishop's Preservative &c.) Upon
 you observe, (p. 40.), that his Lord-
 ship does not reject this *Absolution*, because
 its claim of it is not founded in *Scripture*;
 by an Argument drawn from the Nature
 of the Thing; i. e. He does not do it at
 Rome, because He does not do it here. But,
 it is not true, that His Lordship does
 reject this *Absolution*, because it is not
 founded in *Scripture*. So far from it, that
 he frequently gives that very Reason for
 rejecting It, that It is not mentioned in
 the Gospel, nor any Stress laid upon it there.
 These are all those *Texts* which have been
 often wrested from their Natural Sense
 to support this *Notion*; and which He ex-
 presses as not containing that *Doctrine*;
 which you your Self endeavour to
 turn into a contrary Sense, from what
 has been shewn to be their only *True Sense*:
 This is this, I say, but rejecting this *Ab-
 solution*, as not founded in *Scripture*; and
 laying that *False Ground*, on which so
 many have pretended to build it up? And
 you had mightily forgot your Self, and
 your Lordship's Argument, which you profess
 to

to answer, when you made this *Observation*.

But, 2dly, if you expected an *Explicit Declaration* in *Scripture*, in so many Words, that you expected a very Unreasonable Thing, that you expected, that the *Scripture* should contain, not only All *Truth* to be believed, but likewise, All *Falsehood* to be rejected. This *List* would be *Infinite*, as the *Chinings* and *Fancies* of *Men* are. But as *Scripture* contains All *Truth*, necessary to *Salvation*, so whatever is not plainly therein *revealed*, is not to be received: unless it be something that is a Part of *Natural Religion*, and is, in a manner, *revealed* to every one of Us by *God*, in the *Reason* and *Understanding*, which He has given Us to know *Him*, and our *Duty*; which, I am sure, *Humane Absolution* is not. And therefore

3dly. An *Argument* drawn from the *Nature of the Thing*, if it be truly such, is the *Best Argument* in the *World*: and is an *Argument*, by which we are to examine other *Revelations*, to see whether they proceed from *God*, or not; it is certain, that *God* will never reveal, as *He* empowers *Others* to teach, any thing contrary to this his *Own First Revelation*. On such *Arguments* All *Natural Religion* is founded, which is the *Ground-Work* and *Foundation* of all *Reveled Religion*. Therefore if this *Argument* from the

e Thing, be Good and Just here; it is
 n *Strongest*, and *Best*, that can be given;
 what, we are certain, no *Revelation*
 e T God will ever shake. And is it not
 re evident, that No One can have Au-
 bely to *Absolve* Another, unless He
 rem He *Absolves*, is certainly *Absolved*;
 Ching that He cannot be certainly *Absolved*,
 Scis He is *Infallibly Absolved*? To e-
 alve the Consequence of this *Self-Evident*
 in *position*, you must prove, that either
 be S has given his *Power of Pardoning*
 Rel out of his *Own Hands*, into the *Hands*
 ver *Fallible Men*, to dispose of *Pardon* as
 d U please: And then, tho' They will
 to indeed be, in that Case, *Infallible*
 am *knowing* who ought to be *Absolved*; yet
 erey will be *Infallible* in *knowing* who
 n to be *Absolved*; because They Them-
 y selves are entrusted with the *Power* of de-
 and ing it, notwithstanding that They may
 to use that *Power*; or you must say, that,
 w God keeps *His Pardons* in his *own*
 it *hands*, yet He has promised to bestow
 even, as certain *Fallible Men* shall prescribe
 ning Him, who yet may *prescribe Wrong*.
 Reven then their *Prescriptions* will be *Infalli-*
 R that is to say, will be always *Infalli-*
 No followed by *God's Pardon*, tho' They
 ion. not in any Thing else *Infallible* them-
 be es. Both these *Suppositions* are the
 great-

greatest *Indignities* offered to God, contrary to all our *Notions* of his *Nature* and *Attributes*; as they represent *Him* a little regarding the *Salvation* of his *Creatures*, as to expose it to the *Passions*, *Ignorance*, or *Malice* of *Others*; and leaving it either entirely, or in effect entirely to *Those*, who may perhaps never dispose of it aright. Or, lastly, you may be reduced to affirm, that God has granted *Infallibility* to some *Persons*, now in the *World*, that so *They* may be qualified to dispense his *Pardons*, and *Graces* according to *His Will*; which, it will not be sufficient to say, but which you must prove, before you can overthrow the *Bishop's Demonstration*.

It is not enough to say, as you do, that *this* would prove, that if our *Saviour* had really so intended, *He* could not have given *this Power* to his *Ministers*: For it is no better an *Objection* against our *Saviour's Power*; than it is against God's *All-Mighty Power*, to say, that *He* can do *Impossibilities*, or certainly will do *Injustice*. Our *Saviour* might have done *this* without all doubt; and had *He* done *it*, without all doubt *He* would have added *Infallibility* to such a *Power*: without *this*, *He* cannot be supposed to have done *it*; because it would be doing

Injustice, and dealing very hardly
 Men, to trust their *Salvation* to Fal-
 Men like Themselves; which we can
 bring our selves so much as once to
 of so *Kind*, and so *Gracious* a Ma-
 It is as easy to conceive, that our Lord
 would confer his *Grace of Pardon*, (not by the
 Hands of his Ministers, as you say, but)
 the same Time that They lay on Hands
 Absolution, as an *Outward Sign* of their
 giving for it, or of declaring the *Terms*
 which Christ has declared it will be
 granted: as (not by Means, properly, of
 Sacraments, as I have shown before,
) at the same time that we are per-
 forming those *Outward Forms*, which are
 Signs of the *Inward Dispositions*,
 which should accompany them, and which
 are the only Means of *Grace* therein. But
 if this be true, it is nothing at all to
 Purpose, of proving the *Absolutions* of
 Men now to be *Authoritative*. For,
 They would, if They had been ap-
 pointed by Christ, (which you never do,
 I believe, never will, prove that they
) be as *Authoritative*, as the *Outward*
 Action of *Baptism*, or *Eating the Lord's Sup-*
 per: yet those *Outward Actions*, not certainly
 conferring *Grace*, cannot be called *Autho-*
ritative; (if you will forcedly apply a
 Name to *Actions*, that can belong only
 proper-

properly to *Persons*;) and all that call this *improper Sense* of the Word, be *Authoritative* in the Sacraments, is *Inward Disposition*, joined with a *Life* able to it; which certainly, as certain *God is True*, will procure to us his *Forgiveness* and *Eternal Life*. And so, supposing *Absolution* by a *Fallible Minister* to be an *Institution* of *Christ's*, (which it is not granted to be,) it would not even then be properly called *Authoritative*: because, then the *receiving Absolution* would be an *Outward Sign* of some *Inward Good Disposition* on the Side of *Persons Absolved*; the Sacraments are; and a mere *Prayer* on the Side of the *Absolver*, that may perhaps not always be heard, as the *Sacraments* are not always *Effectual*: and still the *Inward Disposition* of the *Person Absolved* would be the only *Real Mean* of *Grace*; the *Prayers* of the *Minister*, and the *Outward Forms* used, would be only *Means* to excite this *Disposition*, which remains the only *True Mean* of *Grace*; and which are not be *Means* of *Grace* Themselves, but a *Good Disposition*, with a *Good Life* following, is; because they would not have the same *Constant*, and *Certain Effect* following them, that it has; which is necessary to constitute a *Mean* of *Grace*; i. e. a *Mean* of placing Us in a *State of Favour*, and *Acceptance* with *God*.

you ask, *May not such Absolution be
 called Authoritative, the Power of which
 is granted, and executed by his Authority?*
 I answer, 1st, No such Power is granted by
 him, and consequently no Authority;
 For signifies always a *Just Right* to exe-
 cise some Power, when applied to *Persons*,
 and from the *Word* properly belongs;
 but when improperly applied to *Things*,
 as *Arguments*, Those on which the *Right*
 of that Power is founded. 2^{dly}, No such
 Authority, and Power, can be granted,
 without *Infallibility* being granted along
 with it, to prevent *Mistake in the Exercise*
 of it (as I have before shown;) because
 it would frequently be an *Authority* to
 dispense the *Favour* and *Pardon* of God;
 and still, we are most certain, can never be
 Absolved from God Himself.
 I say, this *Argument* makes all *Men*,
 who are not *Infallible*, Incapable of being trusted
 with any other Means of Grace; and consequently
 renders the whole *Priest's Office* to imply an
 Inability in the very *Notion* of it. I an-
 swer, No *Men* are trusted with Means of
 Grace, no *Men* being *Infallible*; and no
 who are not *Infallible*, can be supposed to be
 trusted with them, without affronting God.
 Means of Grace, which are without Our
 assistance, are Those which *Christ*, our Only
 Saviour, and *Mediator*, has obtained for us;
 L the

the *Remission of Past Offenses*, the *Assurance*
 of *God's Spirit* in our *Difficulties*, and
Hopes of Happiness hereafter; all
 even are *Means of Grace*, or *Means*
 placing Us in the *Favour of God*,
 otherwise than as *they* are joined with
Universal Obedience, and *Compliance*
 the *Terms* proposed to Us. I own, there-
 fore, that the *Priest's Office*, in the Sense
 of a *Sacrificatorial*, and *Mediatorial Office*,
 have above explained it,) is *Impossible*
 every *Notion of it*, without *Infallibility*
 the *Express Appointment of God*; and
 actually vested, not in *All* that have
 even *Infallible*, as the *Apostles*, but in
Single Person of Christ Himself. His
Ship's Argument, as you say, (p. 41)
 as to the *Substance of it*, this, *Christians*
have their Sins pardoned them on certain
Conditions; but *Fallible Men* cannot certainly
these Conditions; (i.e. not *what* are the
Conditions; for that all *Christians* should know
 and that is plainly laid down in the *Gospel*
 but *who* are the *Persons* that come under
 those *Conditions*, and consequently demand
Pardon of God;) therefore *Fallible Men*
 cannot have *Authority to Absolve*; because
They know not, and cannot know, what
God reveals it to *Them*, who ought to be
Absolved, and who come up to those
Conditions, on which alone *God* has pro-

pardon of Sins to Men, through Christ.
 hence you take Occasion to argue (in a
 Different Manner indeed) thus :
 Men are to be admitted to the Sacraments
 on certain Conditions, (i. e. on Certain Out-
 ward Conditions, for Those are, and can
 be the Only Conditions of Men's Admit-
 ting, or Excluding Others from, their As-
 sessment;) But Fallible Men cannot tell,
 whether they come Qualified to receive them
 according to those Conditions, (i. e. accord-
 ing to those Outward Conditions, which
 they see before their Eyes, and can al-
 together tell, whether Others come up to
 or do not;) Therefore Fallible Men
 have Authority to Administer the Sa-
 craments. Such an Argument requires only
 to expose it. If you mean, as I
 explained you in your Minor, or Second
 Proposition, it is visibly a False Proposition;
 Fallible Men cannot tell who perform
 good Actions, which They may see, or
 infer from Others without any Difficul-
 ty. If you mean, that Fallible Men can-
 not judge of Inward Dispositions, which are
 the Conditions that Qualify Others to re-
 ceive the Sacraments worthily; it is no-
 thing to the Purpose: for Inward and Hid-
 den Dispositions are not, and cannot be, the
 Conditions upon which the Pastors of the
 Church are to Admit Others to the Sacra-
 ments,

ments; but *Outward* and *Apparent* Actions, which They can judge of; tho' these *Outward Dispositions* are the *Conditions* of receiving any *Benefit* from the *Sacrament*. And, besides, I must observe to you, there happens to be *Four Terms* in this *Syllogism*; which, I suppose you know makes a *Syllogism* good for Nothing.

You proceed, (p. 41.), and say, *Argument subverts all Authority of the Christian Religion, and the Reason of every tutored Means of Grace.* But here you are in a gross Mistake, both the *Nature* of the *Argument* and of *Religion*. For, if you had considered these Things, you would have seen, that the *Method* of *Salvation* in the *Christian Religion* is *Authoritative*, as you love improperly to call it; since a Man, by being sincerely a *Christian*, does become *Infallibly Certain* of his *Salvation*: as a Man is *Infallibly Certain*, as a *Demonstration* taken from the *Attributes* of *God* can make him *Infallibly Certain* that the *Facts* of the *Christian Religion* are *True*; for that depends on *Scriptural* and *Historical Evidence*, which is sufficient to determine our *Actions*, but does not come up to a *Demonstration*: But, a Man is *Infallibly Certain*, from the *Demonstration* that there is, (and which he can perceive if He reflects,) of the *Attributes*

goodness and Justice in God; that, if He
 only seeks Him, and is disposed to
 after his *Will*, and to receive the
 in the *Love* of the *Truth*, whenso-
 and from whomsoever it is offered;
 ever He may *Err* in his *Choice* of a
 particular *Method*, which He embraces af-
 the *strictest Enquiry*, and with the
Sincerity, as the *Truth* of God; He
 nevertheless be accepted by Him;
 by this Means, has a sure *Resting-*
 and becomes *Infallibly Certain* of his
 religion. Besides, as the *Christian Me-*
thod of Religion, is a *Method*, which, tho' the
Facts that support it were not capa-
 being proved *True*, yet is so agree-
 to our *Natural Notions* of God, and
 on, that it would, even on that Sup-
 on, be, what you call, an *Authorita-*
Method of *Salvation*. But, It is an
 ritative, that is, an *Infallible Method*
Salvation, as It is *True*, and proceeds
 God; and therefore will *Infallibly*
 All that *Believe* it, and live up to
 Terms and *Precepts* of it: tho' They
 not *Infallibly* know Themselves,
 it would certainly *Save* them. Again,
Method of *Salvation* may be said to
 thoritative; as *Laws* are said to have
 rity, when the *Law-givers* grant *Au-*
 to the *Executive Power* to see them
 L 3 observed;

observed: But God has given, *Authoritative* His only Begotten Son *Christ Jesus* the *Salvation* of Men, upon their *Observance* that *Method* which He prescribed: Therefore it is in this Sense *Authoritative*. The *Sacraments* can be called properly, your Sense of *Authoritative*,) *Authoritative Means of Grace*, (as you call them p. 42.) I cannot allow, for the very Reason which you give, that *Grace*, or *Favour of God*, does not *Infallibly* attend the *Participation of Them*; or because, *who partake of them do not Infallibly* receive *Grace*, or *Favour with God*: because they are only, as I have already fully shewn, the *Outward and Visible Signs*, of such an *Inward Disposition*, as joined with *good and honest Behaviour*, places us in a *State of Grace and Favour* and *Acceptance with God*; and consequently, in a *State of Salvation*.

Your arguing here, from a *Power of administering the Sacraments*, which *Christ* himself instituted, to a *Power of Absolving* nothing to the *Purpose*; till you first prove that *Christ* instituted *Absolution*, as well as the *Sacraments*. If it be so, why is *Absolution* ranked among the *Sacraments* and *Institutions of Christ*; and why is there *Anger* against the *Papists*, for calling it so? If it be not so; (as neither *The Church of Rome*, nor *You*, can prove)

ever pretend to prove from any *Ex-
tended Rule in the Gospel*; which however
is equally *Needful for Absolution*, as
what we call the *Two Sacraments*;
on all your *Arguments* and *Parallels*
drawn from the *Sacraments Instituted by*
Christ, to *Absolution not Instituted by Him*,
all the way to the Ground.

His Lordship had mentioned (p. 92. of
his *Preservative*, &c.) a *Passage* out of
John's Gospel (xx. 23.), which He en-
deavours to rescue from a *Misapplication*
of it; upon which the *Wildest*, and most
unreasonable *Claim* was said to be founded.
He says, *If they amuse you with that Power,*
which Christ left with his Apostles, &c.
You cry out, *Why amuse, My Lord?*
What Texts of Scripture Amusements? No—
Misapplying *Them* to *Purposes They*
are never intended for, is *Amusement*,
of the *Worst Sort of it*: when the *Sound*
of the *Words* is only attended to; and
employed to work upon the *Passions*, and
the *Weakness of Good Men*, who have the great-
est *Regard* to any thing they imagine to be
taught. This is properly speak-
ing *Amusement*, as it is giving us the Ap-
pearance, and *Shadow of Arguments*, with-
out the *Reality*, and *Substance of them*:
This *Amusement*, that has been *Fatal* to
true *Christianity*! and that has been ever

put in *Practise*, not to support Truth, even what They imagined to be True, but for the *Temporal Interest* of Some, who valued nothing, but what served to advance *that* ! Nor is this *Amusing Men* Criminal, because it may have been used *many*, or even in *all*, *Ages of the Church*. Those, in the first *Ages*, I am pretty certain who, tho' I cannot call them *Successors* of the *Apostles*, yet were their *Followers*, Claimed no such *Powers*, of *Remitting* and *Retaining Sins*, as you plead for. The Church of *Rome* indeed Claimed *them* in *Perfection* ; and this *Claim* was the *Foundation* of all their other *Enormities* ; whilst the *People*, made to believe that *they* could obtain the *Graces* and *Favours* of God, but through Them, suffered Them to do with *Religion*, as They pleased ; and grew in *Process of Time*, to believe Them as *fallible*, as ever the *Apostles* were, or Christ Himself ; and dared not to oppose any the *Least* of Their *Commands*. Then These were so far from being *Successors*, that They were not so much *Followers* and *Imitators* of the *Apostles*, but *Corrupt Inventors* of a New *Religion* of their own, under the Title, and Show of the *Religion of Christ*.

When His Lordship said (p. 94) his *Preserv. &c.*) that They might see Holy

er, to the Misapplication of this Text,
it is Impossible for them to depend upon
Right, as any Thing certain, till they can
that every Thing spoken to the Apostles,
gs to Ministers in all Ages: This Answer
not founded (as you represent it, p. 43.)
his False Presumption, viz. that the
y can claim no Right to the Exercise
Part of their Office, as Successors to
Apostles, till they can prove that every
that was spoken to the Apostles belongs
them: But It was founded on this True
tion, That the Clergy can claim no Right,
y because it was given to the Apo-
till they can prove the Other. When
prove, that They are the Proper Suc-
of the Apostles, so as to succeed to
their Rights; or that the Apostles de-
ed this Right to Them; or that Christ
inted, that It should devolve on Them
the Apostles; or that being Fallible,
Possible They should enjoy It: you
then, indeed, answer his Lordship's
ment; and not till then.
t you go on (p. 43.) to accuse his
ship of taking away from the Clergy
Right to Exercise any Part of their Office.
his Right is, by this Argument, taken
it is not His Lordship that takes it
; but the Reason of the Thing, and
Holy Scriptures themselves, take it a-
way.

way. And if they cannot be shown to have any such *Right*, but on this *Foundation*, that *They* are the *Successors of the Apostles*, I cannot see but that it must be taken away; this being a *False Foundation*, for which *They* can produce no *Proof*. But I take the *Right* of the *Clergy* (I cannot call it *Authority* properly, because that implies *Command*, and *Dominion*, which *St. Peter* expressly forbids *Pastors* to exercise 1 *Ep.* v. 3.) ; I say, *this Right* is to be founded on quite a different *Bottom* : on the *Right* which every *Visible Church* or *Congregation of Christians*, has to observe the *Institutions* of our *Lord* ; to appoint *Persons* to perform them ; to imitate the *Apostles* in *Practises* which appear to have been designed for to continue in the *Church* ; and to do every thing *Decently* in *Order*, and to *Edification* ; and consequently to *exclude* from, or *admit* *Persons* into *External Communion*, upon *Visible* *Plain* *Reasons*, which *They* can all see, know ; but not to *admit* or *exclude* from the *Favour* and *Grace* of *God*, which is not at all left by *Him* to the *Disposal*.

When you call loudly for an *Apology* for *Christianity*, (p. 44.), if the *Church* thus ; I must tell you *Christianity* has no *Apology* here ; for *It* teaches no

doctrine, as you contend for; which if *It*
 I will venture to say, no *Apology*
 would be sufficient to justify *It*: But the
 voice of too Many *Christians* in all
 Ages, I am afraid, needs a great deal;
 no more than can be brought in their
 defence. But if *Any*, in any *Age* of the
 Church, claimed such *Apostolical Powers*, as
 we are speaking of, (nay such *Powers*, as
 is not clear the *Apostles* Themselves
 had) and merely, *because the Apostles had*
Them: I should make no Scruple of say-
 ing with You, *False was their Claim, and*
unlawful (not their *Authority*, for that
 I deny *Them* to have had, but)
Pretence to Authority; when They could
 not prove, that every Thing, (at least this
 kind of the Power of Absolving Sins) that
 was spoken to the *Apostles*, belonged to them;
 and that even what was spoken to the *Apo-*
stles implied such a Power in it to belong
 to them. But in this Matter, I believe,
 all Truly *Primitive Ages* are to be de-
 cided: for in their *Absolutions*, it never
 appears they meant any more than Ab-
 solving from *Church Censures*; and Re-ad-
 mitting into their *Assemblies* such Persons,
 who were Gross and Scandalous Vices, They
 were justly excluded; *Absolving* Them from
 the just Dislike of Men, and not from the
 Displeasure of God; which They had no Power
 to

to alter ; but which was taken off, or continued, according to the *Sincerity*, or *Insincerity* of the *Penitent*. Or, if any thing was understood to be added to this, was only *Making* such *General* and *Conditional Declarations*, to all that truly Repent. They found frequently made in the Gospel together with *Hearty Prayers*, and *Charitable Wishes*, for the *Offender* ; and not a *Declaration*, or *Decision*, upon which they pretended the *Pardon* and *Favour* of God to depend. But, tho' I believe, this may be made out, with little Pains, yet I do not prosecute it here ; because, in the first place, that it was not so, and upon Supposition that you could disprove this ; you would only prove, that *Fallible Men* may be in the *Wrong*.

His Lordship gives a Reason (p. 94) his *Preservative*, &c.) why this *Text* should not be understood of the *Power of Absolution* given to *Any* now : because the *Notion* of *Absolution* in *Fallible Hands* built upon it, *contradicts the Natural Reasons of God*, and the *Design and Tenor of the Gospel* ; and therefore the *Sense*, which would support this *Notion*, cannot be the *True Meaning of any Passage in the Gospel*. Instead of answering the Argument here, and showing, that the *Text* mentioned proves any *Powers* at all for the *Absolution*

sinners to be given to the Clergy
 ; supposing (tho' not granting) that
 Apostles had the *Proper Power* of Ab-
 solving Sins, or that They ever Once put it
 in practice : Instead of this, I say, you
 now (p. 45.) what you have all this
 time really been contending for ; and call
 it *Romantick Doctrine*, which no Man,
 consequently *No Church of England*
 teaches. But I can point out, and
 name Particular Persons, who have very o-
 penly, and plainly taught It. What was the
 Book, called, *The Case of Schism Sta-*
ted, which chiefly gave Occasion to the Bishop's
 Preface, but this very *Romantick Do-*
ctrine, which now, it seems, you are a-
 voided of ; placing our *Eternal Salvation*
 in such Trifles as *Absolutions*, and *Benedic-*
tions, and *Regular Successions* ? Was not the
 learned Mr. Dodwell an Adversary, who
 followed this Matter (farther indeed than He
 followed by Many even of the same
 Party to this Extravagance, that He assert-
 ed our Souls, naturally *Mortal*, to be made
 immortal by *Baptism*, and only by *Bap-*
tism received from Those, who derived
 their Succession in a *Regular Line* from the
 Apostles ; which was putting, with a Wit-
 out, our *Eternal Salvation* in the Hands
 of Men, whom He never pretended to be
 infallible ? Are not almost all Dr. Hicks's
 Books,

Books, directly in Support of this *Romantic Doctrine*? If it were needful, I could produce *Quotations in Abundance*, out of their *Writings*, that would clearly show that his Lordship was not fighting with the *Shadow* of his own *Imagining*. But there is no need of going far off, when You Yourself are the *Adversary*, and reach into the same *Places*, what here you are ashamed of, to disclaim. What else is it, to make the *Success* of every where, as you do, the *Success* of *Christ*, having His *Authority*; *Prayers* and *Mediators* to *Reconcile us to God*; *Intervention Necessary to our Salvation* (15.); in *Opposition* to a *Bare Power* declaring upon what *Terms* God will give *Blessings* to *Christians*, and expressing His *Wishes* for them; which you scorn as *Common* to *Clergy* and *Layity*, *Men* and *women*? I see not how you can vindicate your self from having taught *this*, as you call it, *Romantic Doctrine*, but by maintaining another *Doctrine* much more *Romantic*, and *Harder* upon the *Attributes* of *God*, viz. That the *Absolution* of a *Priest* is so *Necessary* to *Salvation*, as we cannot be saved *without It*; and not so *Effectual* towards *It*, as that we can be saved *by It*. You go on (as you do) to recite a Part of a Sentence of the *shop's*, which I shall set down entire

For Reasons you will presently perceive.
 Lordship says, (p. 91. of his *Preserva-*
&c.) 'To claim a *Right* to stand in
 d's stead, in such Sense, that *They*, with
 their *Infirmities*, and *Prejudices*, and
Stakes about Them, can absolutely and
 tainly, *Bless* some, or with-hold a
 ssing from Others; that God Almighty
 h obliged Himself to *Bless*, or not to
 ss, with their *Voice* alone: this is the
 ghest *Absurdity*, as it puts a *Power*,
 hich nothing but *Infallibility* can sup-
 d; it, into the Hands of *Men*, remaining
 ak, and Fallible; and, as I think, the
 ghest *Blasphemy*, as it supposeth *Al-*
 ghty God, to place a *Sett* of *Men* above
 g Himself, and to put out of his own Hands,
 Disposal of his own *Blessings* and *Cur-*
 and This is what you call *Colouring*, and
 vinding *against Worshipping the Sun and*
 , as ; against what no One ever taught;
 by n These are the *Claims*, and, if I re-
 more ber Right, in some of the very *Words*,
 Attri r. *Hicks*, and other *Writers* of that
 ion But I shall at present examine your
 , as er to this *Colouring*; 1st, on the *Claim*
 and of *Absolution*, as you contend for it;
 tha 2dly, from an *Argument*, drawn by
 (p y of Reason, from the *Sacraments*.
 f th 1st, The Question is not; whether a-
 ntire tt of Men can absolutely *Bless*, or with-
 hold

hold Blessing, independent of God? But, whether God has so given up his Graces, Blessings, into the Hands of Men, who is confessed, are not Infallible, as to oblige Himself to Bless, or Curse, according to Their Voice, and Declaration; and has, in Effect, placed Them above Himself, since They are not under his Immediate, and Infallible Guidance; and put of his own Hands, into Their Fallible Hands, the Disposal of his own Blessings and Cursings: tho' it should be still confessed, that They received this Power from God, and are in that Sense Dependent on Him; i. e. that They are under Him, receiving this Power from Him; but not from Him, as Exercising It, without his Opposition, so as to oblige Him by it: whether it does not follow, as the Bible says, that if it be True, that such a Power is dislodged from Heaven, and lodged in the Hands of the Church, it is a strong Argument, on the Side of the Papists, against their Protestant Fellow-Labourers, that fallibility is first lodged there, because alone is sufficient for so great and so important a Trust: that so the Exercise of this Power, as well as the Power itself, may be in the Dependence of God; and his Honour vindicated, They being not placed above Him, but Mere Instruments in his Hand; and

wholly *disposing* of his own *Blessings*,
Curfes, and only employing Them as
 s, which He keeps entirely under his
Immediate Guidance ? How do you
 these *Questions* ? By crying out (*p.*
Who claims such an Absolving Power ?
has this Description of Absolution to do
that Power the Clergy justly claim ?
 out ever once explaining, what *Pow-*
er you claim, or what you intend by *Ab-*
solution. I own, you do not pretend, *to set*
themselves above God, nor *to take from Him*
the Disposal of his own Blessings, and Curses :
 do affirm, that you pretend that He
 has *set you up above Himself*, and *has given*
you the Disposal of his own Blessings and Curses,
to You; which, if it be a
Pretence, and what *He* has not done,
 Effect, tho' not directly, or perhaps
 your Thought, to pretend the *For-*
feiture and a *Mere Pretence* it must be e-
 ed to be, till you can prove it, some-
 better than hitherto you have done,
 more. But then I can never allow,
 you can prove This, that there can be
 necessity of *Receiving Absolution in any*
from their Hands ; and till then, I
 call this by its True Name, *Setting*
themselves above God, in Effect ; tho' They
 and never so much, that He it is that
sets Them above Himself. They have
 M no

no *Command*, nor *Authority*, from God to admit into, or to exclude from the Church, the *Body of Christ*; tho', it be allowed, that They may admit, or exclude, upon Good and substantial Grounds from their own *Congregations*, which is another, and different Sense of the Word, as they are called Churches. What does it signify, that They do not pretend to be Channels of *Grace*, or *Means of Pardon*, by any Rights or Powers Naturally inherent in Them; if they pretend to be such by any Rights, or Powers given Them, which They cannot prove to have been given them; which, I think, I have already proved cannot have been given Them, Christ being in his own Person, the only Channel of *Grace*, and *Mean of Pardon*, appointed by his Father for that End. Till you prove this, (which I am perswaded you never can do,) it avails you nothing to call your selves, as you do, *Instruments* and to say you are made *Ministerial* to the *Edification of the Church*, purely by his Power, and only so far as you act in Conformity to his Will, which may be True, but is nothing more than a *Purpose*. If God has pleased to confer the *Holy Ghost*, only by You, and to annex the *Power of Ordination*, to the *Imposition of your Hands*, it is no *Blasphemy* to claim, or exercise that Power, and it is *Absurd Blasphemy* to claim

er, without claiming Infallibility to
 port It. God may give and *dispose* of
 Graces, as He pleases; but *He* is not
 e accused of doing what is *Absurd*,
 contrary to his own *Attributes*: and
 have the *strongest Demonstration*, that
 never actually does *such Things*. To
 that *Bishops* have the *sole Power* of
forming, and *Ordaining*, (p. 47.) is on-
 firming something of *humane Appoint-*
 e, Things settled by the *Church*, for
 own *Edification*; and has no Relation
 e *Disposal* of God's Graces. Then you
 the *Paragraph*, with *Begging* the
 tion, (p. 47.) *Is it not rather allowing*
submitting to God's own *Disposal*, when
 ep close to those *Methods* of it, which
 self has prescribed? This is precisely
 thing in Question; What God has
 ribed: which we have in Part deter-
 d, by proving that something He
 not possibly have prescribed: the O-
 Part I shall next consider, under your
 ment from the *Sacrament*.

ondly, Your *Argument* here, (p. 47.)
 anded on *Three False Suppositions*:
 that the *Sacraments* are *Necessary*
salvation; which *They* are not *abso-*
 but only *generally*, and as far as
 think them to have been enjoined
 Christ, after our *sincerest Enquiry*.

laid on *Matters* of quite another Na-
 how often the *One* is spoken of, and
 ed upon, and how seldom the *Other*;
 I confess, to Those, who believe
 to have been *Appointments* of *Christ's*,
 ned to continue to the *End* of the
 they become *Necessary*; in so much
Obedience to *Christ* is *Necessary* to the
 of *Christians*; but not for any
 in the *Ceremonies* themselves.

Second False Supposition you go upon
 (p. 50, 51.) *That the Administration of*
sacraments is entrusted to the Clergy;
That They are only to be administred by
Faithful Clergy, I suppose you mean, or else
 ; but nothing to your Purpose. I con-
 if *God* had made the *Sacraments*
 e *absolutely necessary* to our *Salvation*; if
 had made the *Validity* of those *Sa-*
 caments to depend on Their being
 igned by such *Particular Persons*;
 had left Those *Persons*, *Fallible*,
 subject to *Mistake*; this would bring
 e nearer; and would bring upon it
 e *Absurdities*, charged upon the *Do-*
 of the *Necessity* of *humane Absolution*,
 of *Absolution* from the *Hands* of *Fal-*
 Men. And therefore this *Doctrine* is
 possible, and as contrary to the Na-
 and *Attributes* of *God*, as the *For-*
 But this *Doctrine* has no Foundation

in Scripture. The *Outward Signs* in
Sacraments are properly the *Actions*
 Those, whose *Inward Dispositions* they
 signify, and represent; and not of Those
 who assist Them in the *Outward*
Actions. *Baptism*, or *Dipping in Water*
 to signify the *Answer of a Good Conscience*
 in Him who is dipped; which is the
 which *saves Him*. It was indeed neces-
 sary that some should be sent to *Baptize*.
 as it was a *sincere Profession of Faith*
Christ, and a *Vow of Obedience to Him*,
 upon which the *Pardon of Past Sins*, and
 the *Promise of Future Favour with God*,
 observing the *Terms* proposed, followed.
 So no One could be expected to make
 this *Profession*, or make it *sincerely* or to
 Purpose, unless He *Believed* the *Doctrine*
 He *professed*; and no One could *Believe*
 without being taught, and told it; and
 One could be *taught* without a *Teacher*
 and no One could be a *Teacher* to be
 depended upon, unless He were sent by
 with Full *Testimonies* of his *Veracity*
 of such *Infallibleness*, as should prevent
 Those that should depend on Him from
 the Fear of being *Misled*. And therefore
 it was necessary that the *Apostles*
 be sent to *Preach the Gospel to all Nations*
Baptizing them, &c. But, that therefore
 is still *absolutely Necessary* to be *Baptized*

One of a Particular Set, or Succession of
 does not in the least follow: especi-
 considering that no Mention of this
 ssity, or even *Intention*, is ever once
 throughout all the *Writings*, either of
Evangelists, or of any of the *Apostles*:
 still it may be comprehended within
 Rules of Order, and Decency; that, it
 for the *Edification* of the Person Bap-
 ize, and of the Congregation, or Church,
 He should take his *Profession* upon
 in Publick, it was likewise fitting,
 the Publick Officer, or Minister of the
 Church, should perform it, and no Other
 in Ordinary Cases. The Lord's Sup-
 was Instituted to be a Perpetual Out-
 Sign, of our Inward Disposition to-
 God and Christ. In Breaking Bread
 Drinking Wine, we gratefully comme-
 ate the Death of our Saviour; profess
 Belief in Him, our Dependance upon
 and Obedience to Him, and our Mu-
 Love to one another, as being all
 members together of his Mystical, or Figu-
 re Body, i. e. his Church, his Society,
 Kingdom, his Subjects, and People. Here
 no Immediate Necessity of any Minister:
 so we do not find expressed any *Inten-*
Nation that there shou'd be Any: Our Sa-
 gives no Commission to Any to be such,
 as did in Baptism: Nor do the *Apostles*

any where intimate that there ever was any such *Minister* of this *Sacrament* in *Time*; or leave any *Directions* about *fixing*, or *appointing One*, to their *Followers*; or *appoint Any* Themselves for this *purpose*. But, as the *Churches*, or *Congregations of Christians* thought it proper to *express*, with *One Consent* and *Aloud*, in the *Sense* They had of the *Great Blessing* of *God* to Them thro' *Christ*, and of the *Condescension* and *Kindness* of *Christ* our *Saviour*: so They thought it likewise proper to do this by *Him*, whom They appointed to be *Generally* their *Mouth* in the *Publick* and *United Prayers*, which They offered up to *God*; and to appoint that no other *Person* should do this in *Their Name*, but *Him*, whom They appointed for that *End*. And, as far as this is looked upon, as a *Regulation* made by the *Church* for the sake of *Order* and *Decency*, and not as any thing *Essential* to the *Advancement* of the *Ordinance* of *Christ*: it is a very useful *Appointment*; and very easily to be complied with, by Those, who are justly and verily perswaded, whatever *Reasons* they may have, that it is *Unlawful*.

This being the *State* of the *Case*: what you say (*P. 47.*) is very *Absurd*, supposing that the *Sacraments* are absolutely *Necessary* to *Salvation*. For if *God*

made the *Part* of the *Minister* at all
 rial to the *Sacrament*, so as that the
 cy or *Nullity* of it depends upon
 ; and consequently has left nothing
 e *Sacrament* subject to the *Will* of
 : then, I say, it is Ridiculous to
 of His *setting* such *Means* of *Grace*
 e *Himself* ; as if *Inanimate Things*, like
 d and *Wine*, and *Water*, can be placed
 e *Rank* of *Power* ; or can have the *Sal-*
 ist of *Men* put out of *God's own Power*,
Theirs : whereas it is not at all Ridi-
 They s, to say, of *Men* who are Capable
 eceiving *Power*, and of Using it right,
 abusing it, that, if *God's Graces* and
 ons, are put into *Their Power*, They
 e remaining *Fallible*, *They* are put out
 ey *God's own Power*, and *Those Men* are
 s above *God Himself* ; since it is plain,
 e *Case*, that *They* may dispose of
 y, wrong, and so as *God* would not
 e *Case* of *Them*.

it at your *Third False Supposition*, which
 y *Fathro'* all this *Head* of *Absolution*, and
 o and I have, I hope, in Part refuted al-
 ns y, is, *That the Imposition of Hands*,
 ded with *God's Grace* and *Pardon*, is an
 e : *Institution* of *His*, as much as the *Sacra-*
 rd, y, to last to the *End* of the *World*,
 able that it is the *Sacrament* of *Penance* : for
 God now not what the Word *Sacrament* signi-
 fies,

fies, or where the great *Evil* lies of
 ing new Ones; unless it mean an *Institution*
 on of *Christ* Himself. Now this *Duty*
 of the *Sacrament of Penance*, of which
Solution is the *Form*, taught by the *Pope*
 constantly, and by *You* here, is w
 void of all *Foundation* in the *New*
ment. It would be most strange, that
position of *Hands* for *Pardon* should
Institution of *Christ*, and yet be not
 I will not say mentioned, but even
 at or intimated, in all that is rec
 of what *He Himself* said to his *Apo*
 or in any of their *Accounts* of his *Re*
 and *Institutions*; which *They* cert
 should have been most *Express* about
 specially considering that it is a *Pos*
Ordinance, not at all *Discoverable*
 Light of Nature, but rather shocking
 it. You have some Appearance of
ment for *Laying of Hands* for *Bene*
ons; the *Apostles* being often said to
on Hands to cure Diseases, and to
 the *Holy Ghost*; tho' That proves
Right to the *Clergy* now, to do it
 the same *Notion*: but here you have
 so much as the Colour or Shadow
Argument; it never once appearing
 the *Apostles* themselves *Laid on Hands*
 Any for the *Pardon* of *Sin*, or to
 them from it; tho', if *They* had,

of and have given no *Right*, to the *Clergy*
 to do the same. The *Text* in St.
Doct. (xx. 23.) proves nothing like this
 which *Sacrament*, as I shall show you, when
 e P to examine what you say, in *An-*
 w to the Bishop's *Exposition* of it. But
 w e I come to this *Text*, I shall take No-
 tha of some of your *Arguings*, and *Inconfi-*
 old es, and *Self-Contradictions*, on this *Point*.
 not hen you have with great *Pains* laid a
 en b *lation*, that, I have shewn you, will
 reco nothing, you begin to build very fast
 Ap it. You open (p. 48.) with an *Accu-*
 s Re against his Lordship, that *He takes*
 cer *tice of Scripture*; (when He has ex-
 bou asserted this *Doctrine of Absolution*
 a P ve no *Foundation* There, and has an-
 le b ed particularly all the *Misinterpretati-*
 ock of *Texts of Scripture*, from which O-
 of I have endeavoured to raise it;) but
 Bene in a new *Way of his Own*, He has con-
 d ted against this *Power*, from the *Nature*
 to e *Thing*: (a *New Way* indeed, to con-
 oves against a *Thing* by proving it *Impossi-*
 it e You say (and indeed you are in the
 have to beg *Leave to say*, since you are re-
 ow d not to be at the *Expence of proving*)
 ring *this Power stands upon as sure a Bottom*,
 Ha as *Consistent with the Goodness and*
 o A *lty of God, as the Sacraments*: both
 ad, *Pretences* I have already answer-
 ed,

ed, and, I hope, proved to be *False*. proceed; *The Clergy justly claim a Power of Reconciling Men to God, from express Texts of Scripture; and of delivering his Sacraments to Penitent Sinners.* Who, that reads this Place of your Book by its self, would imagine, that you had already given out a long *Roll of Texts* from *Scripture*? And who could believe, that you did not cast his Eyes back to the former Parts of your Book, that you had brought One single Text of *Scripture* to support this *Power*? Nay, that you declared, (p. 31.) professedly treating the *Sacredness* of the *Ecclesiastical Character*, as it is founded in the *New Testament*, it was unnecessary to mention it, in this *Dispute*?

I confess, I greatly rejoyce that you do not pretend to produce Any *Texts* of *Scripture*; because, I am persuaded, it is impossible for you to find you cannot. If you could, I own, the *Argument* would turn very heavy upon *Christianity*, which, in this Case, would be thought to support a very enormous, and so *Absurd* a *Claim*: and this would be the strongest *Argument*, that ever yet was found against the *Truth* of our *Scriptures*. But, as (God be thanked,) there is no such Thing found there, so I cannot but look upon this, as none of the *Smallest*,

of the *Authentickness*, and *Incorrup-*
Power of those *Sacred Books*; that, amidst
 the *Corruptions*, and *Impositions*, and
 his *Heresies*, and even *Blasphemies*, that
 have introduced into the *World*, and
 self, upon *Christianity*; and with all
 ready *Tyranny*, and *Absolute Power* over
 the *Minds* of the *People*; with all their
 that *Union*, and *Blind Obedience* to One
 : They have never been able to cor-
 had *Those Books* so far, as to make *Them*
 support this *Claim* of *Absolving Sin*, or
 you to make it consistent with *Them*;
 eating found (upon *Trial* I am apt to suspect)
Chara the *Only Way*, to preserve such *U-*
ment, and *Powers*, was to *lock up Those Books*;
 in which They could not alter, nor corrupt
 to bring about their *Designs*;) that
 at you the *Laitie* might not discern, by see-
 of *Them*, how much They had departed
 it is the *Doctrines* contained in *Them*, or
 you could Injustifiable Their Pretences were, if
 turn they were to be tried by *Those Records*
 in themselves. If *Any* now a-Days, desire
 to maintain the same *Pretences* and *Claims*,
 : and the most *Corrupt Body* of *Christians*,
 that ever were, did: I know of no Other
 which would proper for Them to take, but the
 ed,) which Their *Prudent Ancestors* took;
 I can to *Lock up* from the *Sight* of Their
 the *sm*, *Those Dangerous Scriptures*, which
 now

now it is out of Their Power to take
 One Step to This is, to allow Them
 Sight of the Words of Those Books,
 without permitting Them to Judge for Them-
 selves of the Sense and Meaning of Them,
 and this is the Step which All, who
 claim against Private Judgment in Matters
 of Religion, and are for Christians submit-
 ting to Unexamined Decisions of any Church,
 are plainly taking.

But to return from this Digression.
 You endeavour (p. 48, &c.) to evade the
 Bishop's Argument, against the Claim of
 Power of Absolving Sin, from the Ministers
 of the Thing; because Fallible Men
 then be made Absolute Dispensers of
 Blessings, and have the Power to do
 save as They pleased: by saying, that
 is only a Conditional Power, which
 Claim. This you would support by
 saying, that all Instituted Means of Grace,
 the Sacraments are, are but Conditional
 Means; and yet are necessary. As to
 of the Sacraments, I have already argued
 ed; that They are only remotely
 of Grace, and not absolutely necessary
 Themselves, as Morality is; but on
 Obedience to what we think Christ has
 stituted and Commanded, which is Christ's
 Morality, is so. I have shown before
 the Only Means of Grace, properly

without Our selves, is *Christ*, and his
 Accession with his *Father* for us. The
 Elements are only *Outward Signs*, of what
 is Promised, and of Those *Dispositions*
 in Us, raised by the *Memory* of those
Promises, which accompanied with a
 whole Life, are the *Means of Grace* with-
 out our selves, i. e. are *Means* of placing
 in a *State of Favour and Acceptance*
 with God. The *Outward Signs* can be no
 otherwise called *Means of Grace*, than as far
 as they serve to bring to our *Remembrance*
 the *Benefits* of our *Saviour*, as excite us
 to a *Grateful Disposition*, producing a *Good*
 and an *Universal Compliance* with all
 the *Terms* proposed in the *Gospel*. If Im-
 position of *Hands* for *Absolution* from a
 Sin was such an *Outward Sign*, instituted
 by *Christ*, it might have been in this re-
 spect called a *Mean of Grace*; whilst
 the *True Mean of Grace* still remained
 in our selves, and would be necessa-
 rily a *Ceremony* appointed by our *Savi-*
 our in *Virtue* of our *Obligation* to observe
 his *Commands* and *Institutions*. But as
 it is not so; as there is no such thing
 appointed by *Christ* as a *Sacrament* of
 Grace; but as this is a mere *Invention*
 of Men, who found their Account in it:
 our Arguing, from the *Sacraments* be-
 coming *Conditional Means of Grace*, is nothing
 to your Purpose. You

You use another *Instance*, (p. 49.) which is scarce worth mentioning, it is so *a Mistake*. You ask; *Is not the Christian Religion necessary to Salvation, tho' all Christians are not saved?* For, 1st, All Christians, truly Christians, are saved; this is the very *Doctrine* of the Gospel, and the *Design* of the Christian Religion. 2^{dly}, Christian Religion is the *Doctrine* that all are saved thro' Christ, (whom I have already owned to be a *Mean of Grace*, the *Only External Mean*,) if we sincerely believe in Him, and obey Him: The *Design* of which *Doctrine* I allow to be necessary to the *Salvation* of All, to whom it is fully and *entirely Reveled*. But this is Foreign to the *Question*; and proves nothing of what I contend for.

I shall next observe how you contradict your self, and give up what you have been all this while contending against his Lordship. (P. 48, 49.) You own, *If the Clergy, thro' Weakness, Prejudice, exclude Persons from the Church of God, they injure only Themselves*. What was the Bishop's whole *Design* in his Argument, but to prove this single Thing, that no Person could have a *Right* to be excluded from, or to admit into the Church of God, so as to affect the *Salvation* of Others? He was not denying the Clergy any *Powers*; nor even Inquiring what

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rights (or, to speak more properly, Duties and Obligations) They had; only shewing, that This Power They had; not; of Excluding or Admitting into Church, of God; or of affecting by Authority. They had, the Salvation of Men; and proving it, from Their self, Fallible, and Subject to Mistake, or Passion, or Prejudice. But then in you, consistently with This Conclusion, maintains; (p. 13.) that Christ's Authority with his Ministers; (i. e. expressly) plainly mean there, the Presence; and promised, as you there go on at whatsoever They should Bind, on Earth, should be Bound, or Loosed in Heaven; and (p. 15, 16.) that the Mention of Other Men, (i. e. the Clergy) necessary to our Salvation; and blames Hardship for saying, that it wholly upon God and Our selves; (p. 21.) they have a Right to reconcile Men to God; that They have Christ's Authority, in Consequence of it, their Administrations are Necessary, and Effectual to the Salvation of Mankind; that Those who such his Pastors, are surely out of the way of Grace; and to the same Purpose (p. 33.) that They are, as you represent Them all along, Priests, and Ministers in Christ's stead, and His, and His.

N Apo-

Apostles, *Successors*. These are such
 traditions as you can never maintain.
 And, as I hope you did not see Them
 so did not intend to maintain Them.
 hope, now I show Them to you, and
 Them together before your Eyes
 will no longer pretend to defend
Sides, in such *Contradictory Propositions*
 but will either plainly show Their
falsity; or openly avow the *Truth*
 forring the *Shame* of maintaining,
 you must know to be *Wrong*, to
 confessing that, being a Fallible Man
 have once in your Life been in an
 What gives me the greater Hopes of
 a *Behaviour* in you; and clears up
 my Opinion, of all *Suspicion* of
disturbing your self on Purpose, to confound
 and mislead Others: is, that you
disturb your self in the very same Sense
 which you, I think, would not have
 if you had felt it; the *Contradictions*
 too close together to be overlooked
 by your most careless Readers. You
 (p. 51.) *Why must the Salvation of Penitents*
be endangered, or made Dependent on the
sole Pleasure of Clergy, because They can
Reconcile them to the Favour of God
i. e. in plain Words, Why must the
Salvation of Penitents be made Dependent on the
sole Pleasure of the Clergy, because

Dependent on Their sole Pleasure? For
 is, if They ALONE can reconcile them
 the Favour of God: unless you will say,
 you now deny, that the Clergy are In-
 directly, and are always directed, and govern-
 ed, immediately by the Unerring Spirit of God;
 Constantly and Certainly to act, not
 according to Their Own, but according
 to His Pleasure. Thus I leave you to
 consider this Matter; and to see whether
 they can reconcile the Concession above-
 mentioned; which is, as to the Sense of
 the Sacrament, repeated no less than Four Times in the
 following Pages; that Absolution, if
 fully withheld, injures not the Person
 who is denied it; and if given without due
 Considerations in the Penitent, (tho' Due there
 may be only such Attrition as the
 Church allow, to be sufficient with Absol-
 ution for the Pardon of Sin, tho' not
 sufficient for it,) it avails nothing; (p. 51.) The
 Power of No Man can be endangered by
 Ignorance, or Passions of any Clergyman
 in the Use of this Power: if They err in
 the Exercise of it, the Consequences of their
 Error only affect Themselves; and (p. 51.)
 if Persons are unjustly denied the Sacraments,
 they may humbly hope, that God will not lay
 the Burden of them to their Charge: And if
 Persons are unjustly kept out of the Church,
 they may justly demand Admittance, they have no Rea-
 son

san to fear, but God will, notwithstanding accept them, provided they be in other respects proper Objects of his Favour. are the Concessions I beg you to recede from your Former Assertions; or else give up the One or the Other. If you give up your Former Assertions, the only difference that will remain between his Church and You, will be upon this; whether any Imposition of Hands, not absolutely necessary to Salvation, but appointed by our Saviour as a Sacrament, or *Visible Sign*, be to be met with in the Gospel? Which Question, tho' it is of no great importance, is not of near that Importance that the Notion, which You generally defend, and the Bishop always opposes, for That He has shewn to be, Desirable of the Christian Religion, and highly honourable to Almighty God.

But before I leave this Point, take notice of one great Mistake that you make; when you say (p. 15.) *There is nothing in this Doctrine to increase the Pride of Clergymen, or encourage them to lord it over the Flock of Christ* (p. 15.) Neither is there any thing in it that can enslave the Laity to the Clergy; or that their Salvation depend upon Their Arbitrary Will. The latter I own; that all the Will of Men or Devils, cannot make the

Others really *depend on their Arbi-*
Will; or upon any Thing, but what
 himself had thought fit to make it
 upon. But that Your Notions, in
 Consequences, tend to make Men
 think that their *Salvation depends on,*
 it does not really *depend upon,* I
 already, I hope, fully shewn you.
 Claim, as I have set it before you.
 Former Assertions, is even higher,
 that of the Church of Rome; tho'
 as They make it, amounts in ef-
 fect to the same Thing. They do not
 think their *Absolution* necessary to Sal-
 vation, but only a *Relief*, where somewhat
 necessary to it, is wanting. They
 think that *Contrition*, (*i. e.* the most per-
 fect Remorse and Sorrow for Sin) is sufficient
 itself, to obtain the Pardon of Sin,
 at the Sacrament of Penance: (Conc.
 Sess. 14. Cap. 4.): Tho' They
 are to make it be thought so Diffi-
 cult, that a Man can never be certain,
 he has it. And therefore They in-
 stead of a less Perfect Remorse and Sorrow,
 they call *Attrition*; and which
 pretend, helped out with the Con-
 sult of a Priest, and his *Absolution*, which
 is the Sacrament of Penance, will
 obtain the Pardon of Sin. And, you may
 see that this *Easier Mean* of coming

at the *Pardon* and *Favour* of *God*, in
Mean generally taken by their *Flocks*,
the *Other* being universally esteem'd
mong *Them* to be next to *Impossible*,
arrive at. Therefore *Both* your *Opinions*
being as to the *Effects* the same;
They acting more guardedly, than
You *Both* equally made *Men* to imagine
that their *Salvation* depends upon
Will, and *Intervention*; however,
may not see and design it, as *They*
or however you may *Both* contradict
selves, in making *Absolution* necessary
Salvation, tho' you allow, that *Salvation*
may be had without it; i. e. tho' you
allow it not necessary to *Salvation*.

But has this *Doctrine* nothing in it
to gratify the *Pride* of *Those* who
it up; or to help and encourage
lord it over the *Flock* of *Christ*? Have
so little consider'd the *Spring* of all
Immense Corruption, which prevails in
Papist Countries, and of that *Intolerable*
ranny that the *Laitie* there groans
as to be *Ignorant*, that it is this
Doctrine, which supports all that
Fabrick? Is not all their *Wealth*, and
their *Lordships* and *Principalities* owing
This? When, from only *Absolving*
the *Displeasure* of the *Church* or
gation, such *Notorious Offenders*,

justly incurred it ; and by that So-
 lemnity readmitting *Them* to their *Assem-*
blies, from which *They* had been excluded ;
 and, from pretending to no more than
 the *Pretence* was raised, that such
Notions affected the *State of Christians*
 in *Regard to Favour, or Displeasure* with
 God (which at first *They* were not pretended
 to, but only as *They* were *Just* ; and
 not the *Censures* or *Absolutions* them-
 selves, but the *Crimes* or *Repentance*, on
 account of which, when *They* were *Narra-*
 ted and *Visible*, These *Judicial Decla-*
lations of the *Church* were made ;) I say,
 when this *Pretence* was once set up, what
 could not The *Lords* and *Governours* of
 the *Church* able to do, by the Help of it ?
 when they had established These *Notions*,
 they built up upon them this *Tyranny* in
Independence, thro' the *Ignorance* and *Stu-*
pidity which *They* propagated amongst
 the *Laity*, and which was their great
 strength, and which then was represent-
 ed to be The *Order*, and *Peace*, and *Uni-*
ty of *Christ's Church* ; what could resist
 that ? How easy was every other *Pre-*
text to support this, and to obtain eve-
 ry way an *Entercase of Power* ? How readi-
 ly did Those poor depressed *Laity*, who
 were made to believe that Those great
Ministers of Christ, and *God*, had in
 their

their Hands the *Keys* of the *Kingdom*
Heaven, to open and shut, to admit
 exclude, as *They* pleased; throw up
Them every thing else that *They* deman-
 ed; all *Dominion* and *Power*, even
Worldly Affairs; submit *Themselves*
 be *Their Vassals* and *Subjects*; and
 to *Them* all their *Earthly Treasure*
Hopes of obtaining from *Them*
Heavenly Ones, which *They* thought
 wholly in *Their* keeping? For who
 make any *Scruple* of giving the
World, if he had it, in *Exchange* for
Soul? Or would any one dare to
 hold the *Fruit* of his *Body*, all the
 most dear to him in the *World*, for
Sin of his *Soul*; if He thought there
 no other *Way* to expiate it? I am
 to own, that many of *Those*, who
 thus *Arrogant*, and *Domineer* in the
 use of these *Powers*, may be *Atheists*
Infidels: But many, who are not so,
 tho' *They* suspect that *God* will,
 time or other, take *Account*, put
Evil Day far off; and whilst *They*
Their Lord tarrieth to come, and may
 haps long tarry, in the mean while
 their *Fellow-Servants*, and divide, and
 joy the *Spoil* of the *Earth*.

come now to examine your Answer to
 Lordship's *Explication* of the Text in
 John (xx. 23.), *Whosoever Sins ye re-*
they are remitted unto them; and whose-
Sins ye retain, they are retained. Up-
 his his Lordship has said, (p. 95. of
Preservative &c.) The Apostles might
 understand the Power of remitting
 retaining Sins, to be the same with that
 of Laying their Hands upon the Sick, to
 a miraculous Recovery was particularly
 by Christ. To this Exposition, which
 Lordship mentions only transiently as
 a plausible One, after having shown another
 singular One to be Impossible, as con-
 trary to a Sense contrary to our Natural
 Sense of God's Attributes of Wisdom and
 Justice: You object, (p. 51.) first, If
 the Exposition be possible, then it is possi-
 ble that the Apostles might think, that in
 the Power here intended to be given them,
 nothing at all was intended to be given them:
 the Power of Healing the Sick, was already
 conferred upon them: and consequently, this
 did not properly entitle them to any
 more at all. To this I reply, that it does
 appear, that the Apostles had yet the
 Power of Healing the Sick, given to them
 as to remain constantly with them.
 If they had it given them indeed, when
 they were sent on a particular Errand
 round

round the *Cities of Judea*; and then
cast out Devils, and *cured Diseases*.
 seems this *Power* did not rest upon
 for, it is plain They had not the *Power*
cast out a Devil, and *cure a Child*,
 his *Parents* had brought to them, at
 Time of our *Saviour's Transfiguration*,
 xvii. 14. &c.) And therefore it is
 possible, and even probable, that our
 our might be here giving them such a
 nitude of that *Power*, as should continue
 remain with them to the *End of the World*
 which seems to have been the more ne-
 cessary, because He was going to leave
 to be his constant *Messengers*, or *Apostles*
 to the *World*. And therefore it was
 reasonable to expect that They were to
 such constant and lasting *Powers* as
 them for the *Future*; as before, when
 They were sent on *Messages* that lasted
 ly for a *Season*, They had those *Powers*
 likewise given them only for a *Season*.
 You object, secondly, that the *Power*
 promised, was something to be given
 hereafter; which supposes they had it
 then: therefore it was something else,
 not the *Power of Healing*; for that,
 say, they then had. I reply; The
Power of Healing They had not yet
 appears by what I said before; therefore
 that *Power* might be now given them

to last with them to the End of the
ly, you say, *The Power of the Keys*
always been looked upon, as the Highest
the Apostolical Order: but if it was only
Power of Healing, it could not be so;
the Seventy, who were Inferior to Them,
it. I reply, First, a Thing having been
s looked upon to be so, is a Good At-
of Error, but no Reason, or Rule, for
Secondly, I own the Power of Heal-
is not the Power of the Keys. Nor has
Text any Relation to the Power of the
which was only a Power of Opening
Kingdom of Heaven, i. e. the Dispensa-
of the Gospel; (as I shall show you
fully, when I come to consider your
ervations on the Words of our Saviour
St. Peter;) which Power, I allow, be-
ed singly to the Apostles; and can on-
e applied, to Any of Their Follow-
a Lower and Remoter Sense.
our fourth Objection, taken from the
ndity of the Expressions, *whomsoever ye*
heal on Earth, I will heal in Heaven,
eaker than all these: for you grossly
ake the Thing. Our Saviour is not
e, according to the Bishop's Explicati-
to assure Them that *whosoever* was a-
ly *healed on Earth*, should be *healed* by
over again in Heaven: but that,
when-

whenever They declared Any on Earth
 to be *healed*, such their *Declaration* should
 be immediately *ratified* in *Heaven*
 and the Person should be immediately
Healed on Earth only, by the Power
 God, always in that Case attending the
Desire. And because *Sickness*, and Pain
 and such Misfortunes here below, were
 understood to be the *Punishment* of Sin
Remitting, or *Retaining* Sins, might be a
 very proper Expression, for continuing
 taking off that *Temporal Punishment*, which
 was inflicted on Account of Sin; since
 it is of frequent Use in Scripture, to express
 the *Punishment* of Sin, by calling it *Burden*
 ly and *Simply Sin*. This Power seems
 have been given, by *Christ*, to all his
Disciples equally; and the *Apostles* first
 gave it to *Others*, during their Life; (as
 it does not certainly appear, that *Christ*
 left it to any after them.) And I cannot
 conceive what Reason you can have
 to confine it only to the *Apostolical Order*
 when *St. John* (xx. 19, 20.) expressly men-
 tions the *Disciples* as being present,
 addressed to by our *Saviour*, without
Distinction of the *Apostles* from the *Seve-*
But after all, his Lordship does not
 you own your self (p. 56.), exclude
 other Sense of this Text, relating to
Spiritual Powers with *Invisible Efforts*

can find, that the *Apostles* ever understood it so, or ever exercised such a *Kind Power*: but only shows, what such a Power, if it was granted to them by these *Words* of our *Saviour*, must be understood to import, and what it could not be stretched to, even on that Supposition; so as to make it agreeable to our *Natural Notions* of God, and his *Attributes*, which certainly our *Blessed Saviour* never intended to contradict.

You next introduce (p 53) the *Commandment*, as you call it, given to *St. Peter* our *Saviour*, *Mat. xvi. 18, 19.* (which ever was only a *Promise* to Him.) *Thou Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it: And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever Thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loose in Heaven.* Upon this *Text*, which the *Bishop* never mentioned, and which is a *Parallel* to that in *St. John*, which he only was speaking of; you ground a *Banter* of Three Pages, as if his *Lordship* had called this *Power of the Keys*, the *Power of Healing Diseases*. To all this *Force* and *Wit* therefore, it would be a sufficient Answer, to say, It is nothing to the Purpose.

But,

But, since you seem mightily to mis-
 the *Power of the Keys*, I shall endeavour
 to give you the true *Sense of that Power*
 on which it is founded; and then come to
 the *Nature of this Power*; and then I shall
 point out to you a very great *Abuse*
 which your Desire of being very Wise
 has led you over, in the Course of
Ridicule.

I. The *Sense of this Passage* naturally
 seems to be This, taking in the foregoing
Verses: I call Thee, for this thy Profession
 Believing me to be *Christ the Son of the*
Living God, which *Flesh and Blood*, (by
 your own humane Knowledge) hath
 revealed unto Thee, but my Father which
 is in Heaven, (by the many Demonstrations
 He has empowered me to give you of His
Truth;) And I say unto Thee, Thou art a
 (i. e. according to the *Sense of the Word*
 in the Original, a *Rock*;) and upon this
Rock, (i. e. and upon Thee, whom I
 call by that Name,) I will build my Church
 (i. e. Thou shalt be, as it were, the Corner-
 Stone in the Foundation, upon which I will
 erect my Church, which, by a Figure, I will
 represent as a *Building*, which I will lay
 on the *Foundation of the Apostles*, and the
Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it,
 (i. e. all the Powers of Hell, of
Death and Destruction shall not prevail,

It, so as to make *It* ever totally
 And I will give unto Thee the
 of the Kingdom; (i. e. Thou shalt
 the great Privilege of first opening
 Gospel of the Kingdom, both to the Jews,
 to the Gentiles: and so I give to Thee,
 peculiar manner, the Keys, as Thou
 First open the Gates of the Kingdom;
 indeed all my Apostles, who, by
 thing my Gospel, open it to the World,
 the same Keys, as well as you.) And
 whatever Thou shalt bind on Earth, shall
 and in Heaven; (i. e. whatsoever, ac-
 cording to my Doctrine and Religion, or
 according to the Directions, which the Infalli-
 ble Spirit, that I will send upon you, shall
 direct you in particular, as, in General, all
 my Apostles with you, You shall appoint, or
 decree, as an Obligatory Belief, or Pra-
 ctice, shall be ratified in Heaven by God,
 and shall really oblige and bind Men;) and
 whatever you shall loose on Earth, shall be
 loosed in Heaven: (i. e. whatsoever Insti-
 tutions, or Ordinances, made only for a
 time, and not, in their own Nature, of
 perpetual and Lasting Obligation, you
 shall agreeably to what I have command-
 ed you to reach all Nations, or according
 to the Directions of the Holy Ghost, dis-
 charge Men from; Men shall be discharg-
 ed, in Heaven, by my Father; so
 that

that they shall be no longer of any *Obligation*, by whatever *Former* they may have been appointed, and quired.)

It is plain from what has been that our *Saviour* in the afore-cited makes use of Three different *Figures* *Allusions*; by all which, as far as He what He said particularly to St. Peter. He seems to intend the same Thing; that Peter should, for that his Brave, Bold *Profession*, be the *First Opener* *Teacher* of the *Gospel*: which was accordingly fulfilled, (*Acts* ii. 14.) where He appears to be the *First* that ever preached the *Gospel*, or *Good-News*, of *Kingdom*, as being (not at Hand, as had preached in our *Saviour's* Time, then actually come; and (*Acts* x.) was He *First* of *All* preaches it to the Gentiles and so opens the *Door* of the *Kingdom* to them also. And to express this Purpose our *Saviour* employs these Three Figures. 1. He calls Him the *Rock*, or Great *Foundation-Stone* of his *Building*, i. e. his Church or his *Kingdom*, 2. He represents *Kingdom* as a *House* already *Built*; Peter, as One that keeps the *Keys* to It; for He does not mention any Power of *Shutting* It. And the *Power* of *Shutting* seems to be the less likely to

understood here ; because the *King-*
dom of Heaven was already *Shut* to the
 and of *Mankind*, all the *World* lying in
 but the *Power of Opening*, was much
 ed, to restore *Men* to the *Hope*
 ed *Trusting into It* by the *Terms* proposed.
Gospel, from which, for their *Sins*,
 were excluded ; and was therefore
 t. *Only* all that was intended. 3. He
 ing ; *He* *Him*, as a *Steward* of the *House-*
 ave, *for Kingdom*, who is to declare his
Orders ; whose *Word* the *Servants*
 take for it ; and by whose *Declara-*
 e *He* the *Master* promises to abide. This
 opul probably meant when He called
 of *Apostles*, *Stewards of the Mysteries of*
 as And this They were. And well
 ne, They be so trusted, having the *In-*
) *the Spirit* always abiding with them,
 Gent to lead them into all *Truth*, necessary
 ngdon *Doctrine* They were to teach ; and
 Promeserve them from all *Error*, that
 Figur any ways be injurious to it. All
 eat seems to have been spoken, not to
 s *Christ* singly, but in *Him* to all the *Apo-*
 ents and to *Him* peculiarly, only as *He*
 ult ; to be the *First* that was Openly to
 to upon *Him* this *Ministry* and *Steward-*
 Powas the *Substance* of all this, which
 Shutcomprehended in what is commonly
 to the *Power of the Keys*, is often claim-
 ed

ed by, and for other *Apostles*, and ap-
to them all in *General*. St. Paul call
Apostles the *Foundation* of the Church, (1
ii. 20.), and *Jesus Christ* the *Chief* C
Stone: and He makes *James*, and C
and *John*, equally *Pillars*, which is t
same Purpose, Supports of the Buil
(Gal. ii. 9.): nay v. 8. He makes H
who was called out of *Time*, long afte
rest, the proper *Apostle* to the Gen
as St. *Peter* was to the *Circumcision*,
to the *Jews*: and (Rev. xxi. 14.) the T
Apostles are described as the *Twelve*
Foundations of the *New Jerusalem*, which
an Emblem of the Church and Kingd
Christ.

2. Having thus explain'd the Te
self; I shall next consider That
which is founded upon it, and is ge
ly called, from the Figure there use
Power of the Keys. It is evident, fro
Figure of *Keys*, which are only use
Opening or *Shutting*, that the Po
the *Keys* must signify a *Power* to open
shut: and, as this is applied to the
dom of Heaven; (i. e. the *Number* of
who are the *Faithful Subjects*, and S
of God, and, as such, will be accept
Him, and rewarded for their *Faithful*
the *Power* here, must be a *Power* to
into, or exclude from, this *Number*.

is Originally in God alone: He gave in the amplest Manner, to his Beloved Christ Jesus, when He sent Him into the World, for the Great Work of our Redemption: and so Christ alone hath these entirely delivered to Him, with the Power to use Them as He pleases; and He always does according to the Will of his Father: He it is, that shutteth, and no Man openeth, and openeth, and no Man shutteth, (Rev. iii. 7.). The Key, which was thought fit to make the only One Kingdom of Heaven, is the Doctrine of Christ; which Christ Himself taught, and He was upon Earth, as the only One to Life; and which He commanded, and sent his Apostles to teach all Nations, after His Resurrection and Ascension, when He was set at the Right Hand of God the Father, and had all Power given Him, to do what He had promised to Them, and empowered Them to promise, in his Name, to Others: and is therefore called the Gospel of the Kingdom. But, tho' this Kingdom of the Keys, in the highest and proper sense, belonged only to our Blessed Lord Himself, being given immediately to Him by his Father: yet, as He sent his Apostles to spread his Gospel over the World, and to preach his Doctrine, by the Way to his Kingdom was laid open

pen to Men, and the *Entrance* in
made easy; so He gave them, in a Se-
dary and Lower Sense, this *Power* of
Keys, not to *open* or *shut* as they please
or by their own *Authority*, but as He
commanded Them, and as the *Inf*
Spirit, which He was to send upon Them,
should direct. And, in this Sense, He
had the *Power of the Keys*; that They
to *teach* and *declare* to Men the Do-
of the *Gospel*, and to propose the
upon which Men were to be admitted
the *Kingdom of God*; by declaring the
Terms, They *opened* the *Kingdom* to
who would observe them, and left
to Those who would not, and refused
Their *Doctrine*; and not, as any who
pears, by any Decisive *Authority*, the
termination of their own. This is pro-
ly called a *Power*, because *Christ* pro-
that what, in this manner, They
declare on *Earth*, should be ratified in
Heaven. But then it was properly
Power of opening; for already the
of *Heaven* was *shut*, by reason of the
of Men; and to all who should refuse
Terms of the *Gospel*, was to remain
But, if Men embraced those *Terms*
which the *Apostles* had *Authority* to
mise Them *Entrance* into the
they were immediately made Men

Kingdom, and included in the Number
 of his Faithful Subjects; which was in
 Figure, having the Gates of the King-
 dom opened to Them. But that this Power
 of the Keys was to descend to Others after
 the Apostles, I see no Foundation to pre-
 tend, both, as They once, by the Doctrine
 they preached, and which They left, in
 their Writings, to all Christians, opened
 the Gates of the Kingdom to All who
 would, in any Time, embrace that Do-
 ctrine, and come up to the Terms propo-
 sed; and so left no Room for Successors
 in this Power: and as the Infallibility,
 which They were vested with, and which
 was a Necessary Condition to the Exercise
 of this Power, did not remain with their
 Successors; and so They could not be their
 Successors in it: and as neither
 Christ Himself, nor They in his Name, ever
 said a Word about such a Succession, or a-
 bout any Persons being to be made capable
 of exercising this Power delegated to them,
 but the Persons of the Apostles Themselves,
 so that any Christian may (as All should
 do) best of their Ability) lay before O-
 thers, and excite Others to consider, and
 receive the Doctrine of the Gospel, and
 come up to the Terms of It: They may be
 said to have the Power of the
 Keys, yet to use the Keys, (i. e. the Do-

Strine of Christianity,) in a Remote
as far as They help Others to enter
and open to them the Way to the
dom of Heaven. And, as all Chri
may, and ought to do this; so it
cularly the Office and Duty of the
to do it, who are appointed for the
ry Purpose by the Church; and so
may be said to be *Watchmen* for the
vation of Others; and to have the
the Kingdom of Heaven, tho' in a
very distant from that in which the
stles had them, yet in some Sense, let
Their Care; not as importing any
and Authority, but only as being *Ser*
and Ministers to God's People. If
would satisfy your self more fully
this Point, I would recommend to you
Incomparable *Track of the Power of*
Keys, written by the ever memorable
John Hales; who sets this whole
in the clearest Light imaginable; and
confess I think, places it beyond all
sible Controversy.

3. Before I leave this Head, I shall
notice of a gross *Absurdity*, that you
ger Pursuit of *Wit and Ridicule*, I sup
made you oversee. You first fix upon
Lordship an *Exposition* of the *Spec*
our Saviour to Peter, which He never
or spoke about; and make Him, b

te of your own Fancy, affirm that the
 nter of the *Keys*, founded upon that *Text*,
 the a *Power to heal the Sick*. And then
 Chri are very merry, in exposing this Child
 it your own *Brain*, and give us a very
 he Culous *Paraphrase* upon the *Words* of
 the Saviour, (p. 55, 56.); which, I agree
 l for you, is putting no Force upon the
 the ds, to make that his Lordship's own In-
 ae Reiteration, because there are no such
 a ds, nor Interpretation of Words, menti-
 the by his Lordship, to make it possible
 e, le you to put a Force upon Them. But in
 any manner of managing this Ridicule,
 g Ser have so far forgotten your self, that you
 If made it singly to fall upon a Person
 lly itely Greater than his Lordship, even
 o ye Blessed Saviour Himself; tho' I do not
 er ge you as intending this; for, I am
 rably perswaded, it was the farthest from
 le M-Mind, when you unhappily fell in-
 e; a: only it may serve to show you,
 d all easily we are led out of our Way,
 n once we give our selves a Loose in
 shall ering what are really Sacred Things,
 e you Power of the *Keys* has indeed no Re-
 I sup n to the Power of *Healing Diseases*:
 up the *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, are
 Spec Keys only of a *Spiritual Kingdom* that
 ever ot of this World. But your Reason,
 n, b The Power of the *Keys* cannot be The

Power of Healing, (by which you would expose the Bishop, who said nothing about the *Keys*,) bears as hard upon another *Power*, the *Power of healing Diseases*, which our *Saviour* did certainly exercise *Himself* whilst *He* lived, and bestowed upon His *Disciples*, after his *Ascension*, and so many times before *It*; tho' it be owned, that it was a *Distinct Power*, from the *Other*. But all your *Ridicule*, upon Supposition that the Bishop had made the *Power of the Keys* to be the *Power of Healing*, is just as strong against the *Power of Healing* it self, and may easily be thus turned upon *It*. Our *Saviour* has told us his *Kingdom* is not of this *World* (p. 54.): But, a *Power over Diseases, Sicknefs, and Health, Sight, and Labour* relates to *Things of this World*, to *Body*, *Pleasures and Pains*: Therefore our *Saviour* (I substitute *Him* instead of the *Bishops*, whom you are speaking of, and you will see that the Consequence is the same) our *Saviour*, I say, (p. 55.) has gotten his own *Doctrine and the Spirit* of his *Kingdom*, when *He* gave to his *Disciples* such a *Temporal Power over Diseases*, whether *He* gave this *Power*, under the *Notion of the Power of the Keys*, or under any other; for it is not this *Power* the *Notion of the Power of the Keys*, but the *Power*, as a *Temporal Power*, which con-

according to you, his *Doctrine* of
spirituality of his Kingdom, and its not
 of *this World*. And then I may add,
 apply to our Saviour, the Consec-
 which you lay to the Bishop's
 as justly, as you do to Him; If
temporal Power of Healing, was given
 the *Apostles*; you have nothing to an-
 to any of *Their Successors*, who shall
 to the *Power of the Sword*, to make
 the *Members of this Kingdom*, and claim
 as right to it; till it can be shown, that
 self, and *Sickness, Sight and Limbs*, do
 truly relate to the *Things of this World*,
 is the *Power of the Sword*. But all this
 upon this Gross Absurdity; that the
 of *healing Diseases*, is an Exercise of
 Power; that, therefore, it being
 by *Christ*, and given by *Him* to
 the *Disciples*, and being a *Power in Things*
 of *this World*, it is exercising and giving
temporal Kingly Power in a *Spiritual*
Kingdom, which is not of *this World*: all
 is exceedingly *False*, and *Absurd*;
 the *Power of Healing* has no Relation
temporal Power, of any Sort, or in any
Kingdom; and therefore *Christ* giving this
 to his *Disciples*, tho' it was a *Tem-*
poral Power, gave them no *Kingly Power* in
this World, nor in the least contradicted
 his own *Doctrine*, of calling his *Kingdom*

not of this World. And this Objection
 yours is exactly the same, as it would
 in any *Earthly Kingdom*, against any *Prin-*
ce, who, by *Natural Methods* cured *Diseases*
persons, to say; that, if He pretends to
Sickness, or bring *Health*, to recover
Sight, or restore *Disabled Limbs*, He
 as well pretend to the *Power of the Spirit*
 and claim a *Right to it*; and that
 setting up for a *King*, because He
Sickness, Sight and Limbs, are *Things*
this World, as truly as the *Power of the Spirit*
 The *Absurdity* is Equal in both Cases
 if the Objection be good, it is as good
 against every *Physician* in the *World*, as
 against our *Saviour*. And it is equally
 strong against our *Saviour*; whether He
 gave this *Temporal Power*, in giving the
Power of the Keys; or whether He
 gave it, at any other Time, or in any
 other Manner; since He did certainly
 give it. But the Truth is, it is an equally
 weak Objection against *Both*. But let us
 pursue this Matter no farther: for you will be
 satisfied, when you come to consider that
 you have *Christianity*, and the *Harmony*
 of our *Blessed Saviour* too much at Heart, and
 to abhor the Thought of such *Prophanity*
Ridicule, as you have, I believe un-
 dergone, suffered your self to be led into.

you proceed next (p. 56.) to consider
 her *Exposition*; that his Lordship gives
 his Text, (p. 95. of the *Preservative*
 where He says this, *supposing that*
 (the Apostles) *applied in (this Text)*
 a certain *Absolution of Particular Per-*
 sons (of which we read nothing, as I know
 it is plain, They could do it upon no o-
 ther Bottom but this, that God's Will, and
 His Pleasure, about such Particular Persons,
 was infallibly communicated to them; and
 that they declared this Will about those par-
 ticular Persons. The Bishop was naturally
 led to observe that a *Judicial Absoluti-*
 on, the Apostles never are once mentioned in
 Scripture as exercising, to seek out for
 any other Sense of the Text before
 giving which might be applied to some
 other; that He found the Apostles did a-
 void it in any put in Practice; and this He mo-
 st certainly gives out as only a *Possible Sense*:
 when He adds, what, if it should im-
 ply a Direct and Formal *Absolution*, it
 would be understood to be, to make it re-
 asonable to the Nature and Attributes
 of God, which He had before argued
 He and thence proves, (p. 96. of the
Preservative &c.), that this Power arising
 from extraordinary Communications of Know-
 ledge from God, cannot relate, in the
 Sense, to any Set of Men, in the
 ar-

ordinary State of the Church, void of Communications of Infallible Knowledge could be, even in the Apostles, the only dation of any supposed Authoritative Absolution. All that you answer to This, is Baptism is an Infallible Institution, Sacred with Absolution; (I hope it is more so, as it is a Plain Institution of Christ's, which This is not;) that Baptism is designed for the Remission of Sins; and if Infallible Communication be not necessary for the Exercise of Absolution by Baptism, cannot be necessary for Absolution by the imposition of Hands.

But all This is wide of the Purpose. For, 1. Baptism; or the being Dipped in Water, is no Certain Absolution, or Remission of Sin; but an Outward Sign, as I have already shown you, of such an inward Disposition, as Christ has only promised the Pardon of Sin to. If it were more than this, the Consequence would be, that whoever was Baptized, i. e. dipped in Water, tho' in their Hearts They did not believe the Gospel, and were Baptized for some sinister End, would yet thereby obtain the Pardon of their Sins; which this would really be, a New Addition of Guilt; Therefore the Instance of Baptism is nothing to what the Bishop said of certain and Authoritative Absolution; because Baptism is not such.

of Humane Knowledge, and Common Rules
 7.) are sufficient to direct the Ministers
 of the Church whom to Baptize, tho' not
 to Absolve: For in Baptism, what
 Remission of Sins, or Absolution attends
 all depends, not on the Action of Him
 who performs the Outward Ceremony of Dip-
 ping another in Water; but on the Action
 of Him who is dipped in Water, as a To-
 ken and Sign, of his Profession of Christ's
 Religion, and of such Inward Dispositions,
 which will produce those suitable Actions,
 which Christ has declared to be the Terms
 of Salvation and Acceptance with God.
 There is no Need of Infalible Knowledge,
 or a Minister and Assistant to another
 in such Work: because His only Office, or
 Ministry, is to perform a Ceremony to an-
 nounce the Efficacy of which depends on that
 Person's Inward Disposition, according to
 the Promise of Christ; or at most to declare
 to the Person Baptized the Terms, on which
 Remission of Sins is promised, by the
 Church, to such an Outward Action, and
 Profession; in which nothing Authoritative
 is understood: whereas in Certain and
 authoritative Absolution, which the Bishop
 is only speaking about, there is a Ju-
 ristic and Definitive Sentence of a Person, on
 which the Salvation of Another is made to
 depend; which, it is Absurd, to suppose

haselhoff v. l. 1. c. 1. p. 101. 20. 21.

it does, unless *That Person* be first supposed to be endowed with a *Certain* and *Infallible Knowledge*. This Matter I have said more fully to before.

3. *Absolution* is not an *Institution* of *Saviour's*; as *Baptism* is; and consequently no Reasoning from *Baptism* to *It* is of Force, to prove the *Use* of it: tho' if 'twere an *Institution* of *Christ's*, it would be an *Outward Form*, as *Baptism* is; not giving Pardon of Sin, but only a Sign of being given on certain Terms by God. *Baptism* it self is; and consequently would not be properly *Authoritative*. *Baptism* is not. His Lordship says, *Apostles themselves did not absolve any*. answer (p. 57.), *Nor does the Water in Baptism of it self purify the Soul from Sin*. I own it; but the Case is Different from the *Apostles*, if *They* ever declared a *Particular Person Absolved*, must mean, that *They*, by their *Infallible Knowledge*, knew that God did actually Pardon that *Particular Person*; and the Person so *Absolved* have certainly been *Absolved*: Whether in *Baptizing* others, they only declared *Them*, in General, the Terms upon which *They* were to obtain the Pardon of Sin, and *Salvation*, which was promised to *Those* who should be *Baptized* and *Believe in the Gospel*; and the Person *Baptized* by *Them* was not certainly *Absolved*.

again, when his Lordship says, That
 was not obliged to bind, or loose the
 of Men, according to their own (i. e.
 Apostles own) Declarations, considered
 their own Decisions, and Determinations :
 answer, (p. 58.) Nor is He obliged to
 Grace by the Baptismal Water, consi-
 only as Water ; but He is, considered
 as His own Institution for that End and Pur-
 ; no Whence you conclude that, tho'
 is not obliged by these Declarations,
 considered only as Declarations of Men ; He
 considered as Declarations of Men Autho-
 rativ by Him to make such Declarations in
 Says. Name. In Baptism, by his own Insti-
 any. He only obliges Himself to give
 Water and Favour to Those who come up
 from certain Conditions, and not to all who
 rent that Institution, as an Outward Form
 are Here in Absolution, as He has made
 ust Institution, He is under no Obligation.
 ible had Authorized any, He would have
 ly p'd them Infallibility along with it.
 person Apostles were Infallible, They might
 Wh been so Authorized. The Question
 declarations, Whether they were so, or not ?
 on v. Infallible Men, the Bishop has demon-
 of St. Paul, cannot be so Authorized ; tho' the
 to Towns they may lawfully make such
 eliev. tional, and General Declarations, as
 by T. has already openly made by his
 Gospel ;

Gospel; but which are no ways *Autho-
rive*. Thus the whole Strength of
Objections from Baptism fails you.

YOU proceed next (*p. 58.*) to
that his Lordship bears as hard upon
Saviour, as upon his Apostles and
Successors, by denying Him the Power
remitting Sins in his own Person, tho
claimed it. What the Bishop denies
what our Saviour claimed, will be-
pear by setting down their own Words.
The Bishop says, (*p. 94. of the Pre-
vative &c.*) If we look back upon our
vour Himself, we shall find that,
He declares in the Gospel that the
of Man had Power on Earth, to forgive
Sins, even He himself either meant
the Power of a Miraculous Releasing
Man from his Affliction, (which was
upon as the Punishment of Sin;) or,
related to another, and more Spiritual
of the Words, the Power of declaring
that the Man's Sins were forgiven by
By his Supernatural Knowledge, (that
that which belonged to Him as a
Man,) He knew that God was going
show Mercy to the Man. By which
I think it is plain, that the Bishop does
deserve the heavy Censure you think
to lay upon Him, as denying that
had really any Power to Forgive

He did not deny any Power, which
 claimed, but only explained that
 which He owns *Christ* did claim;
 which, in explaining it, he directly a-
 to Him, (for it would be Ridicu-
 to explain a Power which he denied,)
 to agree with *Christ's* own frequent
 ations with Regard to Himself. Our
 says (*Mark* ii. 9, 10, 11.) *Whe-*
 it easier to say to the Sick of the Pal-
 Sins be forgiven Thee, or to say, A-
 e up thy Bed and walk? But that ye
 w, that the Son of Man hath Power
 to Forgive Sins, (He saith to the
 the Palsy,) I say unto Thee, Arise,
 e up thy Bed, and go thy way into
 ouse. (The same Words almost are
Mat. ix. 5, 6. and *Luke* v. 23, 24.).
 this Passage it is very plain, that
 our intended only such a Power of
 g Sin, as related to the Temporal
 ent of it: and so by saying, *Thy*
forgiven Thee (v. 5.), He only
 here, That Temporal Affliction,
 as a Palsy), which, as the Bishop says,
 u very much to your Purpose drop
 words of his,) was looked upon as the
 ent of Sin, be remitted Thee. This
 more visibly appear to have been
 gn of our Saviour in that Expression;
 onsider either the Occasion of it,
 P which

which was the Great Earnestness He
 in the People to lay the Sick Person
 Him, and the Great Faith He ob-
 Them to have in his Power of He-
 Him, (v. 4, 5.); or the Reason
 which was the Cavil, or Mistake of
 of the Scribes that were sitting there
 6, 7.), *Why doth this Man thus speak
 phemies? Who can forgive Sins but
 ly?* This Objection He answers, say-
 saying as you represent Him saying
 59.), that His Power of Pardoning
 General, was proved by his Power
 Healing Diseases; but by making ex-
 pressions, *Thy Sins are forgiven Thee*
Arise, take up thy Bed, and walk, &c.
 lent, and equally Easy to say; which ju-
 are not, but on Supposition, that
 are forgiven Thee, signifies only that
 Temporal Punishment of thy Sins is remitted
 or Those Sins, for which that Temporal Pun-
 ishment is inflicted, are so far removed
 to release Thee from the Temporal Punish-
 ment of them: and then (v. 10.), as a mo-
 ment for this, that the Son of Man
 Power on Earth to forgive Sins, (which
 Temporal Punishment of them;) but
 ally Heals Him; which was no more,
 of it self, to prove that He had the
 Power to Pardon Sin, as to the spoken
 it on Eternal Salvation; but was as 7

Heer One to prove, that He had a Power
 of Remitting the Temporal Punish-
 ment of Sin, or of Pardoning Sin with Re-
 mission of that Temporal Punishment of it. If
 our Blessed Saviour had any where
 affirmed, that He had the Power
 of Pardoning Sin, as to its Effects on the
 Salvation of Men, whilst He was
 on Earth; all his Miracles, and this among
 others, would have been the strongest
 Proof of it, as it must have gained Credit
 in every thing that He said. But as He
 affirmed this of Himself; as He al-
 ways attributes the Pardon of Sin, in that
 to His and Our Heavenly Father,
 (John i. 14, 15); as He says, (John viii.
 12) I judge no Man; (in which Absolving
 from Sin is included;) tho' He adds,
 yet I did judge, this Judgment is true, be-
 cause He was not alone, but He, and his Fa-
 ther sent Him, i. e. because his Father
 committed all Things to Him, and He cer-
 tainly knew His Will; and again as He
 says more expressly (John xii. 47, 48.)
 If a Man hear my Words, and believe not,
 I will judge him not; for I came not to judge the
 World; but to save the World: He that re-
 ceiveth not my Words, and receiveth not my
 Words, had one that judgeth him; the Word that I
 have spoken, the same shall judge Him in
 the last Day: So is there no Founda-

dation for asserting this Power in
 whilst *He* was in his State of *Humility*
 here. Whilst *He* was upon *Earth*, *He*
 presented as only preparing Himself to
 Sacrifice for *Sin*, and not as being a
 the Judge, or Dispenser of Pardon. *He*
 even in his Present State of *Exaltation*
 is never described as such: but only
 Powerful Intercessor, and Mediator
 with his Father; having obtained Remission
 of Sins for us, on certain Conditions.
He proposed to us in his Gospel; and
 sat down on the Right Hand of God,
 Great High-Priest with Him. Indeed
 the Last Day, *He* is to be our Judge,
 to Absolve, or Condemn us, according
 our Deeds; when that Day shall come.
 God hath appointed, in the which
 judge the World in Righteousness,
 Man (Christ) whom *He* hath ordained
 xvii. 31.). But even then, if you
 lieve Himself, *He* will judge only
 ing to the Certain and Intimate Knowledge
 which *He* has of his Father's Will
 which his Father has communicated
 in the fullest Manner. This *He* testifies
 pressly Himself, (*John* v.): where *He*
 plainly refers all his Power of Judgment
 the Great Day of Judgment; and even
 represents that Power, as wholly
 from, and subject to, his Father.

Jews had accused Him (v. 18.) of making
 Himself Equal with God, in saying that
 He was his Father : He answers Them
 (v. 19.), *The Son can do nothing of Himself,*
but what He seeth the Father do : for what
soever He doth, these also doth the
Father likewise. For the Father loveth the
Son, and sheweth Him all Things that Him-
self doth : and He will shew Him greater
Things than these, that ye may marvel. For
as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quick-
eneth them ; even so the Son quickneth whom
He will. For the Father judgeth no Man ;
but committeth all Judgment to the Son.
 He plainly ascribes all his Power, of
 doing or Acting, to his Father's Commu-
 nication to Him His Power and Know-
 ledge. Then He makes a General Declara-
 tion of the Terms of Salvation, (v. 24.) ;
Whoever heareth my Word, and believeth in
me, who hath sent me, hath Everlasting Life, and
shall not come into Condemnation ; but is
passed from Death to Life. And then, that
 we might not imagine, He was immedi-
 ately going to execute the Judgment, which
 His Father had given Him the Power of
 doing ; and yet might not think it
 very far off : He adds, (v. 25.) *The*
hour is coming, and now is, (i. e. is fixed
and settled, and this is the Last Time
before it to precede it,) when the Dead shall
hear

hear the Voice of the Son of God: and
 that hear, shall live. For (He goes
 v. 26, 27.) as the Father hath Life
 Himself; so hath He given to the
 have Life in Himself; and (which
 that this relates to the Last Judgment,
 not to any Particular Persons, that
 raised from the Dead, whilst He was
 on Earth) hath given Him Authority
 execute Judgment also, because He
 Son of Man; i. e. because He is the
 son, described in Daniel, (vii. 13,
 like the Son of Man, to whom Domi-
 and Glory, and an Everlasting Kingdom
 given, and who is there described,
 ving that Dominion and Glory given
 when the Judgment was already
 the Books were opened, (v. 10.) This
 necessarily mean the Future, and
 Judgment, to make it agree with what
 Saviour Himself expressly says to the
 as I observ'd before (John viii. 15.)
 ing of Himself whilst on Earth, I
 Man, i. e. I yet judge no Man; tho'
 ing every thing by the Communication
 my Father's Knowledge, I could, and
 hereafter, at the LAST DAY,
 the Time appointed for Judgment
 But then again, whilst He was talk-
 executing Judgment, lest the Jews
 think He was just setting up his

Judgment-Seat; He tells them once
 e, that what He had said was not im-
 iately to happen, nor yet to be put
 very long. *Marvel not* (says he, v. 29.)
 is, for the Hour is coming, in the which
 the Last Time or Age is come at the
 of which) all that are in the Graves
 hear his Voice, and shall come forth,
 that have done Good, unto the Resur-
 on of Life; and They that have done E-
 unto the Resurrection of Damnation. And
 They might not accuse Him of assu-
 any Authority to Himself, *Indepen-*
 of his Father; He concludes with a-
 ing again all his Authority to the Pow-
 and Knowledge which his Father had
 in Him, and which He professes to ex-
 e only according to the Will of his
 er, with which He was perfectly and
 nately made acquainted. Says He
 30.), I can of my self do nothing: as I
 I judge; and my Judgment is just;
 se I seek not mine own Will, but, the
 of my Father who hath sent me.
 Thus the Foundation being taken away,
 our Misrepresentation, and Abuse of the
 op, falls of it self: or if it stands, it is
 Equal Force against our Saviour Him-
 since I have shown you, that the Bi-
 denies no Power to our Saviour, nor
 udes Him from any thing He declared
 bad; but asserts and claims for Him,

what He found *Him* Asserting and Claiming for *Himself*; and only explains *Power*, as *He Himself* explain'd it. therefore, when you very Absurdly accuse His Lordship (p. 60, 61.) of *deposing* Christ from his *Kingdom*, of *making Him to be King*, and yet *no King*; you at the same time must accuse *Christ Himself*, of *deposing Himself*, and *making Himself Sole King*, and yet *no King*: for the Bishop's Assertions in this Matter, are no other, than what He took from the *Positive Assertions* and *Declarations* of *Christ Himself*.

But the *Objection* is very *Ridiculous* and shows that you do not at all understand the *Nature* of *Christ's Kingdom*. First, when *Christ* used the *Expression*, which all this Debate arises, *He was yet properly King*, nor did He exercise any *Part* of his *Kingly Office*. His *Kingdom* properly began after his *Resurrection*; there the *Sacred Writers* universally begin the opening of *It*. Before that, He was only preparing *Men* for *that Kingdom*, which He was to be *King*; and pre-paring only, and sent his *Disciples* round about to preach, that the *Kingdom of Heaven* was at *Hand*. But after He had been *Obedient to the Death* of the *Cross*, He was then indeed highly exalted, and had a *Name* put above him above every *Name*; He was then Lord of *Lords*, and *King of Kings*; He was

Claimed, or characterized, to be the Son of
 as with Power by the Resurrection from the
 ; He had then *All Power* given Him
 in Heaven and in Earth. But even then He
 exercised one Part of his *Kingly Office*;
 to be was to make *Laws* for his *Subjects* ;
 and *Ambassadors*, or *Apostles*, to Man-
 of to bring Them under his *Govern-*
ment ; and to make such *Promises*, and to
 offer such *Powers*, and so to dispose of the
 an Spirit, as to carry on the *Design* and
 ions of his *Kingdom*, which was the *Salva-*
 of Men. From the *Time* of his *Ascen-*
 dence till his coming again, there is no men-
 tion of *Intimation* of his being to exercise
 his *Kingly Power* ; but only of his acting
 as an *High-Priest*, and Me-
 diator for us with his *Father*. He is never
 exercised as a *Judge*, or *Dispenser* of Par-
 don before his *Second Appearance* ; but as
 interceding for *Pardon*, and *Interceding* for it,
 continually his *Father* continually. At the *End*
 of His *Age*, or of this *Last Time*, He is in-
 tended to exercise the *Final Act* of his *Kingly*
 Power when He comes with *Glory* to *Judge*
 the *World*, and the *Secrets* of *Mens Hearts*.
 He will indeed, like a *King*, He will *Absolve*,
 condemn, *Reward*, or *Punish*, every Man
 according to his *Deeds*. And, after He shall
 have finished that *Work*, He will then
 give up the *Kingdom* to God, even the
 Father.

*Father. And when all Things shall be
 dued to Him, then shall the Son also
 be subject unto Him that putteth all
 under Him, that God may be all in all, (*
xv. 24, 28.)

2dly, From all this it appears, that
 even the Father is the True and
 King of the Kingdom; that Christ is
 King over it by Him, to be the Great
 presentative of his Father, his Vicegerent
 and the Visible Governour and Judge of
 the World; that this His Subordinate Kingdom
 to last only for a Certain and Pre-
 Time, which the Father only knoweth
 (for of that Day, and that Hour knoweth
 no Man, no not the Angels which are in
 Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father,
 xiii. 32.) To support this Notion
 Paul argues, (1 Cor. xv. 27.) that
 this Kingdom of Christ was set up,
 God had put all Things under his Feet
 manifest that He (God) is excepted
 did put all Things under Him; and
 consequently, that God still remained King
 himself, notwithstanding any Powers He
 communicated to his Son. And as Christ
 constantly did the Will of his Father
 perfectly knew it, (as He Himself
 declares;) the Kingdom of God, and of
 Christ was but one Kingdom, in which
 the Will of God was always fulfilled. Our

the very same thing with St. Paul,
 (John xiv. 1.) He represents the
 Kingdom, which He was to erect,
 His House, and calls it expressly *his Fa-*
ther's House, where there were many Mansi-
 and tells his Disciples, that He went
 to prepare a Place for them, and would
 receive them to Himself,
 where He was, there They might be also:
 tho' He calls it *his Father's House*,
 makes Himself, as it were, the Master
 and the Disposer of Places in it.
 therefore if all this be a Contradiction,
 you call it (p. 61.), it is a Contradiction
 which not only his Lordship, but St.
 and Jesus Christ Himself have unhap-
 pily fallen into. By This One We may judge,
 Those Others are like to be, which
 shall presume to observe to the Common
 of the Layity.
 to what you accuse his Lordship of
 (p. 62.); of making no Difference between
 and his Apostles, as to this Absolving
 Authority: I answer, that here the Diffe-
 plainly lies; that Christ takes upon
 the Authority, as given Him by his
 Father, of Judging Mankind Finally at the
 DAY; and Then of Absolving or
 condemning them, according to Their Deeds,
 the Will of his Father, which He
 fully is acquainted with; for which
 reason

reason *God* is always in Scripture said to *Judge the World* by *Christ*; tho' *Christ* is the *Judge*. But, as even *Christ* Himself takes not upon Him to judge Men, *That Time* comes; but leaves Them to their own *Conscience*, which He addresses Himself to by his *Doctrine*, by his *Laws*, by his *Promises* and *Threatnings*; and in the mean while does never either *Absolve* or *Condemn* them: So, whatever He may have said to his *Apostles*, sounding like *Absolving Authority* to us, who understand not, so perfectly as They did, in the *Language* of the *Time* He spoke in; it could only mean by it, either such a *Power of Forgiving the Temporal Punishment of Sin*, and *Healing Diseases* intended for *Sins*, as does not relate to what we are here speaking about, a *Power of Absolving Sin* with *Relation* to its Effect on our *Eternal Salvation*; or else, a *Power* in some *Particular Cases*, of *Declaring* the *Infallible Knowledge* which was given Them to lead Them into all necessary *Truth*, that such *Particular Persons* were *Absolved* by *God*, and in a *State of Favor* and *Acceptance* with Him.

As for your *Unworthy Reflection* on his Lordship, (p. 63.) comparing Him with the *Jews*, who *insulted* our *Blessed Saviour*, I can only pity you; and heartily

a Better and more Christian Temper,
to indulge your self in such Kind of
erties. But I must only observe to
from what I have said before; that,
his *Sarcasm* on our *Saviour* is to be
on his Lordship, it is likewise to be
upon *St. Paul*, and even on our *Sal-*
Himself; in whose express Words,
ve shown you, his Lordship has a
ation for every Thing He has affirm-
like about *Him*.

you proceed (p. 62.) with this Mis-
did, representation; that *His Lordship* proves,
in; our *Saviour* had not the Power of for-
giving Sins; because his way of Expression
! *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*: which
s in plain to acknowledge, and keep up that
to a Notion, that God alone forgiveth Sin.
Power I call a Misrepresentation; because
ts *Bishop* never proves, nor so much as
a *Power*, or attempts to prove, that our *Sal-*
vage had not the Power of forgiving Sins:
as *God* directly asserts the contrary (p. 95.
necess. &c.); that He had such a Power;
only explains this Power to be, what,
f *Father* shown you, Christ Himself affirm-
was; A Declarative Power arising
ation the Gift of his Father, and his Infi-
His and Infalible Knowledge of his Will.
Sav. Passage in the Gospel, which you have
ily mention'd, relates plainly, as I have
observed

observed before, to nothing but a Re-
 an of the Temporal Punishment of Sin ;
 not even to this *Declarative Power*, w
 the Bishop speaks of.

But there is another Passage in
 (Luke vii. 48.), which does seem to
 port such a *Declarative Power* ; (and w
 the Bishop seems to have had in his E
 where a Woman who was a Sinner, h
 washed Jesus's Feet with her Tears, and
 them with the Hairs of her Head, and a
 ed them with Ointment ; He says to
 Thy Sins are forgiven Thee. And They
 sat at Meat with Him, began to say
 themselves, who is This, that forgiveth
 also ? And He said to the Woman,
 the sake of Those that sat by, and
 plain the Meaning of what He had
 Thy Faith hath saved Thee, Go in
 Here it plainly appears that our S
 meant to declare a Matter of Fact, Ch
 He knew perfectly well, That Her
 were forgiven by God. For (v. 47) He
 says, Her Sins, which are many, an
 given, and therefore she loves much ; w
 as those to whom little is forgiven, earth
 rally love little : and she having exp
 her great Love and Gratitude to G : ac
 much more than the Pharisee who h ; G
 vited Christ to sup with Him ; it a Fa
 sign, that she thought much more w
 p

Her, than He thought was forgiven
 through His Means; and was much
 sensible of her Condition, than He was
 his: just as a Creditor who having Two
 Debtors, and forgiving the One a Great
 Sum, and the Other a small One; He to
 whom most was forgiven, would naturally
 be most, and be most Grateful, (v. 41,
 And therefore our Saviour's saying
 to the Woman, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*,
 was only Declarative, and of something
 already past; (as appears by the former
 Verse, where the Pardon of Her Sins is
 said to be of, as a Thing already done, and
 having already produced the Effects of
 Love and Gratitude;) and was only
 another Confirmation and Assurance to her,
 that her Pardon was obtained of God; and
 that Her Great Love was a sure Mark that
 she was so. But those that sat by, imagining
 that Christ Authoritatively forgave Sin,
 who had offended: And He, to satisfy Them
 (v. 47) He did not then exercise a Power of
 absolving or Condemning, which He had
 always disclaim'd, whilst He was to be up-
 on Earth, and even after His Exaltation,
 the Time Appointed for Judgment should
 be to Him: adds (v. 50.) *Thy Faith hath saved*
 thee; Go in Peace; i. e. I only declare to
 you a Fact, which I certainly know; but
 it will pass a Decisive Sentence upon you;
 it

it is your *Great Faith*, that has obtained you *Grace and Acceptance* with God, has placed you in a *State of Salvation* and I, only to assure you of *this*, which is already done by my *Father in Heaven*, to confirm you in your *Faith* and I bid you *Go in Peace*, and enjoy that *ward Satisfaction*, which a *Perswasion* you are in the *Favour and Love* of will continually afford you. Thus plain, I think, to any Body that considers it, that *Our Saviour*, whilst He here on Earth, claimed, or exercised *Power of Absolving from Sin*, as to *Effects on Eternal Salvation*; but only as the Bishop acknowledges, and as to belong to Him, A *Declarative Power* arising from his *Infallible Knowledge of the Will of God*. And therefore, upon this position that *this* was the meaning of Christ's saying, that *The Son of Man* has *Power on Earth to forgive Sins*, and that did not relate to the *Remission of the Temporal Punishment of Sins*, (which I will for Argument's sake suppose, though I do not grant,) the *Argument in Form* shall be thus: Christ has affirmed, that He has *Power to forgive Sins*: But his Way is to say *Thy Sins are forgiven Thee*: Therefore (not, as you put it, *Christ has the Power to forgive Sins*, Q. E. D.

His Power to forgive Sins, which He
 was Declarative; or was a Power to
 whose Sins were forgiven. *1st* At
 what you say, (p. 63.), that the same
 would be Good against Christ's
 of Healing Diseases; because His
 Way of speaking to the Diseased Per-
 son, *Thy Faith hath made Thee Whole*,
 is a very weak Argument. For, *1st*, That
 Expression might signify, *Thy Faith hath*
 Me, who by my Infallible Know-
 ledge, knew it, to make Thee Whole. Or,
 It might mean, that *Thy Faith hath*
 moved God, that He has directed me,
 Holy Spirit, under whose Guidance
 and direction I am whilst I am upon
 to make Thee Whole. But, *3^{dly}*,
 over the Expression import, it can be
 ascribed to a Power of Healing, which
 always claimed, and exercised, upon
 Man. tho' His manner of expressing
 it, *Thy Sins are forgiven Thee*, may
 be looked upon as an Indication of his
 using his Power of forgiving Sins to be
 Declarative, while He was upon
 earth, when He every where disclaims
 being as yet a Judge, or the Judging
 Way before the Great Day appointed
 by the Father for Judgment; and is never
 found to exercise that Office; but al-
 ways that of an High-Priest and Media-
 tor,

tor, to obtain Remission of Sins, and fully to intercede for Us with his Father.

As for your *Parallel*, from a Creditor forgiving his Debtor's Debts, by *Thy Debts are remitted Thee*: I must tell you it would be a very Impertinent and Dubious way of speaking; and, I think, would be no great Satisfaction to a Debtor, unless the Creditor gave him further Security for his Release. There is much more the Air of a Messenger bringing a Man the Good News that his Debts are remitted by his Creditor, than of a Creditor remitting them Himself with his own Mouth.

Your next Six Pages (to p. 70) are wholly made up, either of gross misrepresentations of the Bishop, or of exclusive Arguings of your own: in which being already answered, from the very Words of our Saviour, and his Apostle St. Paul, I shall only observe to you a few things, on which your Mistakes are all founded; and remark as I go, some Contradictions you unavoidably fall into.

First, You all along suppose that the Lordship denies that Christ had a Power to forgive Sins, which He never once does; but even contends for that Power in the same manner, and only explains it, as Christ Himself explained it before Him.

You make his Lordship's saying,
God alone can forgive Sins (p. 67.)
 contra-distinction to *Christ*, an Argu-
 ment to prove that He denies the Divinity
 of his *Saviour*: when the Scripture it self
 equally files, The Father God, in
 a distinction to *Christ*, who is ge-
 nerally there called the *Son of God*, E-
 ver page almost of the New Testament
 is Instances of this. And farther,
 He himself continually acknowledges
 the distance between His Father and Him:
 He speaks constantly of his Father, as
 the Author and Origin of all Things; and
 of himself, as his Messenger, his Vice-
 Subject in all Things to His Will.
 He declares, that He came not to do his
 Will, but the Will of Him that sent
 Him (John vi. 38.); that He had not
 Life of Himself, but the Father who sent
 Him gave him a Commandment what He
 should say and speak (John xii. 49.); that
 He was the Way, and the Truth, and the
 Life, not the Way to Himself, but to his
 Father; for He adds, No Man cometh to
 the Father but by Me (John xiv. 6.) Nay,
 our self must be sensible of this: (p.
 66.) when you have told us that
 He created all Things, (which He did as
 the Instrument of his Father, God being
 said to create all Things by, or

through Christ,) you subjoin, (which ports what I have said, and contra all that you are saying for six Pages together;) that God hath PUT all Things in Subjection under his Feet.

If the Apostle plainly taught Us to presume the Bishop might have assumed the same of Christ, without incurring Displeasure. And, if it be owned that Power came from the Father to the Son, was the Gift of the Father; which is the Doctrine of our Saviour Himself and the Apostles from Him; and as you yourself own by your quoting that Passage: It plainly follows that, whatever Honour, Worship, or Obedience is paid to Christ, that Account, must necessarily be understood to tend ultimately to the Glory of God the Father; that the Words of our Saviour may be made good, that the Father be glorified in the Son, (John xiv. 13.) And from all this it appears that his ship had good reason, following the language of Scripture, to distinguish between God and the Son; as by the Word God He meant to express the Great God and Father of all Things, and of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself; who is God in the highest sense of the Word, and is the Fountain and Origin of all the Divine Power, or Godhead in the Son.

Supposing his Lordship had denied
 our Saviour this Power of forgiving Sins,
 if it belongs only to God; (which He
 not, as I have shown before, but
 you accuse Him of doing, p. 67,
 68.): it would not follow, that He
 Him a Creature, or that He denied
 to be God; but only that He affirmed
 such Power belonged to God, i. e.
 the Father, as distinguished from
 the Son of God, or God the Son;
 consequently could only be accused of
 making God the Son to be God the Father;
 I hope, is no great Heresy; or, if
 it is a Heresy of which the Scripture is
 silent as his Lordship.

You would fix it on his Lordship as
 contradiction, (p. 69.) that He allows the
 Father to have Divine Powers, and yet asserts,
 He cannot have Divine Powers, because
 He allows Him to give Grace, which is a
 Divine Power, and not to Forgive Sins, be-
 cause Forgiveness is a Divine Power. The same Ob-
 jection you repeat several Times within
 the compass of these six Pages. But it is
 a Frivolous One: For He may allow
 the Father to have such Divine Powers as the
 Father has given Him; and yet may very
 deny that He has Those, which He
 Himself has declared that He has not, but
 His Father keeps in his own Hands.

Such our Saviour Himself denies He when He denies that He knew of *that* and *that* Hour, viz. the Great Day of *ment*, (Mark xiii. 32.) So He Himself to be properly called Good says He, *There is None Good but One is God* (Matth. xix. 16.) And, as *Declarations* of His own do not contradict what He at other Times said, of *Power* and *Authority* which his Father given Him, and which entitled Him to *Name* of God: So neither, had He declared, or should it appear to be a Natural Consequence of any thing He declared, that the Father had whole served to Himself the *Power* of *Pat* *Sin*; neither, I say, would That have mounted to a *Denial* of his *Divine* as far as elsewhere He asserted it: *denying Him to have* some particular *Power*, (as you in fairness should put it,) is not *denying him to have* *Power*, i. e. *Any Divine Power*, which expressly claimed, as given Him by Father. Now this *Distinction* you should be sensible of (p. 65. and again p. 66.) where you say, *There is SCARCELY known Attribute and Power of God, Christ has not claimed, and which the* *stles* have not ascribed to Him: by *Expression*, tho' you contradict your

the same Page, and p. 67, and affirm, that
 claimed *ALL Divine Powers*, and
 fore *This of forgiving Sin*; yet you
 plainly allow that there may be an
 tion of *Some Divine Power*, tho' of
 RCE Any, i. e. of very Few. But I
 the Truth is, our *Blessed Saviour* ne-
 disclaims this *Divine Power of Forgi-*
Sin, as He did some Others: but af-
 it, in the Sense which the Bishop
 it in; as *Executing the Will* of his
 Father, which He *Intimately and Infalibly*
 He always declares *Himself* the
 of the *World*, appointed as such by
 Father; that all *Judgment is Committed*
 Him, by his *Father*; that the *Father*
 (Himself in Person) *judgeth no Man*, as I
 above more fully shown you. And
 in Sense He was made *King* over His
 Kingdom; which is called in Scrip-
 the *Kingdom of Heaven*; and signi-
 not a *Place*, or a *State*, or a *Dispen-*
 alone, but the *Complex of the Whole*:
 Number of Those who are *Voluntarily*
 Subjects, who obey Him and His
 Anointed, whom He has set over
 who, upon such *Obedience*, are in
 Favour of God here, and will be
 Eternally Happy by Him here-
 And this *Kingdom*, which is to last
 ever, is called by our Saviour *His*

Kingdom; tho' his Government over the Kingdom in it, is to last but for a Time fixed by the Father, even till He shall having put down all Rule and Authority and Power, deliver the Kingdom to God the Father; and is then to cease, and Himself to be subject to Him that put Things under Him, that God (the Father) may be all in all: yet, I say, called Christ's Kingdom; because Christ at present the King anointed by God govern it in his Name, and with his Authority; and is to continue so, till the End comes. But then, as I have observed before, whilst He was on Earth, and before his Death, He never exercised Power: but, till his Death, only preached that the Kingdom was at hand, and that it was actually come; and presented Himself for the Great Sacrifice which was to offer up at his Death. After Rising again, He gave Laws, and sent Ambassadors, as a King: but still did not condemn Men, Absolve or Condemn them; but made General Declarations of what the Salvation of Men was to depend upon. He Commissioned his Apostles to do the same. When He had finished this Part of his Kingly Office, He ascended to His Father and our Father, and sat down at his Right Hand, as an Intercessor and Mediator.

with Him, where He is to remain as
 till the *End* comes. But even when
 Time shall come, at which He is to
 in *Glory* to Judge the *World*, He is
 as He Himself, in the Words I have
 quoted, professed, and as his *Apostles*
 from Him) to execute punctually
 Father's Will, and to act in every Point
 ably to it, according to his *Intimate*
fallible Knowledge of it. He is to be
 the *Instrument*, the *Vice-gerent*, and
 representative of his *Father*; and will Fi-
 Absolve or Condemn only Those, whom
 His Father Wills to be Absolv-
 and Condemned. I cannot see, upon any
 Supposition but this, how God can
 to judge the *World* in *Righteous-*
 and Christ, as St. Paul asserts (*Acts*
 1.). Upon this; God is still left the
 Judge and King, as his Will is still
 the which Governs every thing; and
 making Christ the King of his King-
 He does not at all give the Power out
 but his own Hands, since Christ in all
 acts only the Will and Command
 Father. And thus the Monarchy of
 the Universe is still One, whatever In-
 God thinks fit to make use of in
 his *fallible Government* of It. This is the
 and the only Power which our Sa-
 diate claims, or his *Apostles* ascribe to Him,
 as

as I have already fully proved : and his Lordship *denies him this Power*, nor see. If you do, you would do warn Him of it. I have repeated the *Substance* of what I had more fully expressed before, because it is not only *Justification* of his Lordship, but like of great *Importance*, in order to understand aright the *Nature* of the *Kingdom* of *Heaven*, and of *Christ*.

6. You call (p. 69.) upon his Lordship's *Sincerity*, and ask Him how could *sincerely* declare his *Assent* and *Consent* to the *Doctrine* of the *Church* of *England*, unless He owns *Christ* to be *Perfect* and if He owns *That*, you ask Him to show you, why He could not then *Permit* *Sins*? If by *Perfect* God, you mean the *Father*, the *Bishop* may very consistently with the *Doctrine* of this *Church* deny it. And before you call on the *Sincerity* of *Others*, I would have you ask yourself, how some *Late Divines*, (who suppose it is that you mean, when they speak of the *Church*,) who, falling into the *Absurd Errors* of *Sabellius*, and of *Samosat*, and of the *Old Greeks*, make the *Father* and the *Son* to be the *same*; (i. e. in Effect, the *Father* to be the *Son*, and the *Son* to be the *Father*, and the *Son* to be his own *Father*, and his own

the same of the Father; can sincerely
 the Creed commonly called the Nic
 Creed, considering that in that Creed
 profess to Believe in One God, the
 the Almighty, the Maker of Heaven
 Earth; and in Jesus Christ as the One
 in Contradistinction to Him, who
 He is said there to be very God, yet
 the same time declared to be God
 and Begotten of the Father. How
 agrees with some Notions lately reviv
 amongst us, I leave you to explain.
 I confess, I should be very unwill
 considering Mankind as it is, to ac
 any One of being Insincere; only be
 He holds Manifest Contradictions: ma
 I mean, not to Himself, but to O
 As for any more obscure Passages,
 you may pick up in the Liturgy of
 Church, I cannot but think, They ought
 explained so as to agree with This,
 is a Formal Profession of its Faith:
 (whether much more with the Scriptures;
 we profess to be the only Rule of
 Adhering to which, is
 only Justification of our Separation
 the Corrupted Church of Rome. In a
 other Sense of Perfect God, his Lord
 never denies Christ to be such. And
 never denies Christ to have the Pow
 Forgiving Sins; but only explains it,
 as

as *Christ* Himself explained it: so ne
by owning *Christ* to be *Perfect God*, in
other Sense, than that of being the
God and Father, does He oblige Him
own that He has the *Power of Forg*
Sin, in any other Sense than that in
He has explain'd it; or allow that it
originally, or Inherently in Him, as it
the *Father*; or that it is more than a
Acting the *Will and Command* of h
thers.

Thus I have finished this Head of
Discourse: and proved to you, I
that No *Authoritative Absolution* is
ted by *Christ*; that even He Him
not to *Absolve* any, till the *Day*
in the which He will finally *Absol*
Condemn all Men according to their *D*
that even then He only is to fulfil
Will of his *Father*; and that no Men
Earth have this *Power of His* given
not the *Apostles* themselves tho' *Infal*
and lastly, that no Men, Remaining
libe, can possibly be supposed to ha
without *Affronting God*. I shall no
on to examine your Last Head.

SECT. III.

Of Church-Communion.

U endeavour to lay it upon his Lordship (p. 70.), that his *Retreat*, *g-Place*, and *Lasting Foundation*, and *stration*, is only to prove that all *Communion* is *Unnecessary*. Now as this Heavy Accusation I shall place Lordship's own Words concerning this. The Bishop says, 'I am not going to accuse you of a *Heresy* against *Charity*, as you do the *Donatists*, who had only just the same *Uncharitable*ness, of Adhering to the Consequences of their own Principles: But of a *Heresy* against the very *Possibility*, and *being* of things; or of holding that, which throws Men out of the Favour of God, which way soever They act. You know, there was a Schism amongst your Brethren, upon this Account. Mr. Nelson, in this Instance, thinks Himself obliged in Conscience to communicate with some of your Church. Upon this, you declare, that he hath no Title to God's Mercy. And the whole World allows, that if he communicates with you, whilst His Conscience tells Him, it is a *Sin*, He is

'self-

' *self-condemned*, and out of God's Fa
 ' He is therefore entitled to God's W
 ' both, if He *doth* communicate with
 ' and if He *doth not*. That *Nation*
 ' fore, which implies in it, this Gre
 ' *vincible Absurdity*, cannot be U
 This *Nation*, not of the *Necessity* of C
Communion in General, (as you up
 represent it, and of which the Bisho
 not speaking a Word,) but of the
ty of Communicating with some Part
Church, or *Sett of Christians*, preferab
Others, tho' you think it unlawful to c
nicate with it. But, before I enter upon
 Answer to his Lordship's *Argument*, (I
 I will venture to call a *Demonstration*,
 ever that Word may displease you,) I
 consider the *Meaning*, and the *Neces*
Church-Communion in General.

The only *Communion*, or *Fellow*
 which is strictly and Indispensably N
 sary to the *Being a True Christian*,
 laid upon us, as *Requisite to that*, b
Saviour Himself, and by his *Apostles*
 Name, is the *Communion*, or *Fellowsh*
Faith, and of *Love*: and of which
nal Communion is but the *Profession*, o
ward Visible Sign. *External Commu*
 only Necessary, as it is a *Positive*
nance of Christ, to promote, and pro
 the *Other*; and as all *Obedience* to Ch

necessary: and therefore can only be Ne-
 cessary, where the *Person* who is to obey
 is satisfied that it is His *Command*;
 where *He* finds *others* to hold this
Communion with, who profess
 a *Faith*, and *Love*, as *He*, and not
 only think *Christ* enjoins. It follows
 if Any One, examining in the *Sincerity*
 of his Heart, and to the best of his
 abilities, cannot satisfy Himself, that *Ex-*
ternal Communion is an *Ordinance* of *Christ*;
 cannot be under an *Indispensable* *Obliga-*
tion to *It*: since there is nothing in the
 nature of *Things*, as there is in *Moral*
Laws, to oblige Him to it; but the
Obligation is founded on a *Positive*
Command. Or, if Any One can find no
Christians near Him, to communicate with;
 cannot be obliged to it, because it is
 impossible. Or, (which comes to the same
 thing,) if *Those*, who are near Him, and
 call Themselves *Christians*; yet, ha-
 ving departed from what *He*, sincerely ex-
 pected, cannot but think, the *True*
Love, and *Love*, in *Christ Jesus*, *He* can-
 not deem to be *such*: *He* cannot be obli-
 ged to *Communicate* with Them *External-*
ly because *They* must be to Him, the same
 as *No Christians* at all. *Charity* only,
 should make Him very *Cautious* in
 his *Judgment*. But, to take it
 Low-

Lower; if *Any Church, or Sett of Ch*
ans, should Impose, what He could
 but think in the *Sincerity* of his Soul,
 lawful Terms of *External Communion,*
 which He could not submit to, wit
 wounding his *Conscience,* and sinnin
 gainst God by so doing; tho' per
They, sincerely thinking those *Terms*
 ful, may not be condemned for con
 ing with *Them*: Yet He, I say, w
 thus perswaded in his Mind, cann
 obliged to submit; because in that
 to submit, would be deserting, wha
sincerely thought, the *True Faith,*
Love in *Christ,* for the Sake of tha
ternal Communion, which ought to be
 a *Mark,* and *Outward Profession* of the
Faith, and *Love*; but then becom
 Him (as it is so in his Opinion) the
 and *Profession,* of a *False Faith,* and
 which He ought not to profess. This is
 the *Apostle* intends, when He says
 xiv. 23.) *Whatsoever is not of Faith*
 i. e. whatsoever a Man is not Perswae
 his *Conscience,* he may Lawfully d
 cannot do, without sinning. And
 the *Case,* which his Lordship's Arg
 chiefly regards.

From all this it appears, I think
 a *Communion* of *Faith,* and *Love,* is t
 ly *Communion* Absolutely, Constantly

pensably, Required of *Christians*, to
 exclude Them *True Christians*; (in which
Union They may be, and remain for
 without ever Knowing, or seeing
 or *Christian*, in the World; being in
Communion, not by Actually Meeting,
 Joyning with Others in the Outward
 of it, but by holding that *True*
 and *Love*, in which All *Christians*
 unite, and which is but One; as
 is but one Body, one Spirit, one Hope,
 and, one Faith, one Baptism, one God,
 Father of all, above all, thro' all, and in
 Eph. iv. 4. (Ec.) and that, *External*
Union, is not in the same Manner ne-
 cessary; but is only Requisite, as an Out-
 ward Sign, and Profession of This; and
 it may be had, Lawfully, and with-
 out Injuring This, of which It is but a
 Sign. I confess, *Charity*, or
Love, will reach us, not easily to
 Terms of *External Communion*. Un-
 lawfully, without Good Reasons; as That,
 which is too often made a Mean of
 setting up Hatred and Ill Will among
 Men: nay, will reach us, that it may
 be Lawful, and Commendable to sub-
 ject Terms and Conditions, which it
 is very Unlawful, and Sinful to Impose;
 those Terms, I mean, do not di-
 rectly oppose the End of all *External Com-*

R

munion.

munion. But, in this Matter, every
 is to be left to God his Judge, and to
 own Conscience and Heart, by which
 has expressly assured us Every Man shall
 Judged; and which He, in the mean
 allows no one else to Judge. This
 to me to be the True Notion of Communion
 and of Church-Communion. If I am
 staken in it, I shall be very much obliged
 to You, or to Any one else, that will
 me right: as I Profess sincerely, I
 fire not that *This*, or *That* should be
 in this Matter, but only to know what
 the Truth, that I may follow it, and
 mit to it; which, I here solemnly
 mise, and Bind my self to do, and
 vow, and even to contend for, where
 It shall be made appear to me to be
 ent, from what It seems to me now
 or from what I have now maintained
 be the Truth of this Matter. I shall
 before I proceed to your Answer, set
 the Foundation of this Notion, in
 Words of the Ever-memorable Mr. *Hales*,
Hales, which are so Excellent, that I
 not but think the whole Passage
Transcribing. He answers, in his *Memor-
 nies*, (as They are called,) at the end of
 His *Tracts*, to this Question of a
How to know the Church? Mark
 Notes to know the Church, the

except we will make True Profession, which is the Form and Essence of the Church, to be a Mark. And as there are None, so it is not necessary it should be. For to what Purpose should they serve? That I might go seek and find out some Company to Mark. This is no way necessary; for Glorious things are in Scriptures spoken of the Church, not that I should run up and down the World to find the Persons to be the Professors; but that I should give myself of it. This I do, by receiving upon me the Profession of Christianity, and submitting myself to the Rules of Belief and Practice delivered in the Gospel; tho', besides my self, I knew no other Professor in the World. By this Declaration Mr. Hales does not exclude External, and Church, Communion, but only the Absolute, and Indispensable Necessity of It. Having laid this Foundation, which, till now better informed, I cannot but think that a strong One; I shall now proceed to answer your Answers, or rather (to call them by their Right Name) Evasions of the Shop's Argument. His beloved yisols first Answer is really Amazing, Markay, (p. 70.) This wondrous Curiosity the demonstration, is only the common Case

of an *Erroneous Conscience*, against
 you own, no *Terms* are to be *complic*
 That is, in plain Words; This Arg
 is what all Men are *Agreed in*, and
 is certainly *True*; therefore it is no
 to the *Purpose*. But this *Argument*
 an *Erroneous Conscience*, is, and must
 nified by All, who contend for the
 Necessity of *Communicating* with Any
 Particular Church, tho' against *Consc*
 unless They will manifestly *Con*
 Themselves: And this is all, that the
 ever contends against. The Bishop
 says, nor does it follow from what
 said, that there is No *Obligation* to
ual Communion, where it is not a
 Conscience, and were Any One thi
 Lawful, as you would infer from w
 says (p. 71.). And less does his L
 make it *Indifferent*; for He, on the
 rary, makes it a *Sin* to act against
 ence; whether, in *Complying*, or
 fusing to *Comply*, contrary to its D
 The *Truths* of the *Christian Religion*
 Articles of *Faith*, and *Ordinances* of
 (which you mention p. 71.) are
 therwise *Necessary*: than as They
 clearly *reveled*, and are supported b
 Evidence, as a *sincere Man*, loving
 Truth, and Ready to submit to it
 offered to Him, cannot resist, nor w

sent from; nor will refuse to Profess:
 These Things were necessary to the
 ion of Men; This was a Reason for
 being most clearly and evidently
 unless You can suppose the Great
 and Good to deal so hardly with his
 es, as to require the Belief and Obse-
 of what He gives Them no good
 to believe, nor sufficient Reason to ob-
 And therefore this Answer bears hard
 on the Gospel of Christ; and on the Ma-
 of God: who, I am satisfied, you
 no such Thing; and am far from
 You with intending to maintain
 hard Consequences, which I must
 charge upon your Doctrine; because
 necessarily follow from It, whether
 signed or not. From all this, it
 is that, tho' you might maintain the
 of Church Communion, as an Ord-
 of Christ, and Necessary as such to
 whom it is sufficiently Revealed
 is such, (of which you are no Judge
 other:.) yet you might not tell any
 of People, that they are in Danger
 of being cut off Communion with you. (p. 72.)
 follow their own Persuasion; and pro-
 I add, that Their Persuasion be mis-
 taken up; because, that would be
 them, that Communion with you is
 y, and commanded by Christ; which

is Begging the Question of Them, and
 posing your selves to be of the True
 of Christ, and in the Right, and
 not to be so, and to be in the Wrong.
 But (p. 72.) you repeat again his
 ship's really Invincible Demonstration
 still are Insensible of the Force of
 wholly mistake the Consequences.
 His Argument is, as you say, We
 insist upon the Necessity (in the
 Necessity, whether it be agreeable to
 duty, or be not,) of joyning with any
 cular Church, because then Consenting
 sons will be in Danger either way
 there be a Necessity of it, when there
 Danger if they do not join with it,
 they comply against their Conscience
 Danger is the same. Your Solution
 Difficult, (which in Ridicule you
 exorable, and which you offer in
 his Lordship's Demonstration,) is
 If a conscientious Jew, you say, who
 tell that Christianity is the only Good
 Method of Salvation, and that he has
 no Title to the Favour of God, till
 fesses the Faith in Christ, should re-
 cording to this Argument; will I
 Christianity against my Conscience, I
 of God's Favour; and if I follow my
 ence, and continue a Jew, I am as
 his Favour: You would answer, that

is to obey his Conscience, and to be left
 the Uncovenanted Unpromised Terms of
 Mercy, whilst the Conscientious, (that
 unhappy Word, for it makes Since-
 all,) the Conscientious Christian, I say,
 is tied to the express, and promised Fa-
 vor of God. And then, to apply this to
 purpose, you must say, that none
 have a Right to the Covenants and Pro-
 mises of God, but Those who join with
 the Particular Church; God having an-
 nounced his Covenants and Promises, not to
 all, but to those who have Obedience to Christ, and Belief in
 him, but to the joyning, Right or Wrong,
 your Particular Church. (see p. 173.) Then
 you go on (p. 173.) There
 is the same Absolute Necessity of Be-
 lieving in Christ—tho' the sincere Jew can
 never persuade Himself—A False Reli-
 gion does not become a True One; nor a
 True One, False, in Consequence of their
 wrongs. By which it, you contradict
 what you allowed before, that the Law
 is left to the Uncovenanted, Unpromised
 Mercies, but) TERMS of God's
 Favor. For, if there is an Absolute Ne-
 cessity of Believing in Christ; this allows of
 no Exception; there can be no Terms of
 Mercy without it; nay, even Mercy it self
 is impossible on that supposition: but
 who do not actually Believe in Christ,

tho' through Ignorance, and Want of sufficient Revelation, must Infallibly be damned; however sincere, or howsoever They may be to receive and know the Truth, when offered Them. 2. But we have other Notice of the Goodness and Mercy of God, which has Himself reveled to us, by giving Reason and Understanding to know the visible Things of Him, by the Things which are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead; and in that his Goodness and Mercy together with his other Attributes. And we cannot know every Thing that is of God, yet some Things we are assured cannot be True of Him: such Things contradict the very Principles on which we know, and prove to our selves, that He exists, and that He has any Perfections. Upon this ground We may affirm of Any conscientious Person, sincerely seeking into the Truth, tho' he should miss his Aim of finding Truth, yet cannot be deprived of the Favour of God, and Acceptance of Him. Such a One has (not the Unpromised, Unpromised, but) the Sure Promise of a Good God, to assure Him of it; God, who (as Peter said to Cornelius, Acts x. 34.) is no Respector of Persons; but every Nation, accepteth him, that feareth Him, and worketh Righteousness; and

thing more be Necessary, will take
 that is shall be Reveled to Him in such
 manner, as shall satisfy his Conscience that
 Reveled to Him. This was what
 ly happened in the Case of Corne-
 He was accepted before He was a
 man; and, because He was accepted,
 directed Him, by an Angel sent on
 se, to call for Peter, and to hear the
 ne of the Gospel from Him. Nay,
 Mark how much He was accepted,
 ly Ghost fell upon Him and his Com-
 before They had actually taken up-
 em the Profession of the Gospel by be-
 ptized. This is what likewise the
 assures of; (Philip. iii. 12.) Let us
 re, as many as are perfect, be thus.
 (1. e. press towards the Mark, for
 ize of the High Calling of God in
 Jesus, as in the foregoing Verse.)
 in any thing to be otherwise Minded,
 all revele even this unto You. 3. This
 Relation to the Truth or Falshood
 Doctrine: nor has any Effect to
 That any otherwise, than it is. The
 is not, whether a Thing be True
 se, because I think so: which is
 use: but, whether I am to profess
 because it is so, or because I think
 It's plain, the latter: for if I
 Truth, not thinking it to be so, I
 profess

profess it as *Falshood*; and, for the
 Reason, for which I profess it now, I
 profess it, tho' it were *Falshood*. I
 nothing to justify me in my *Profession*
 my *Belief*; which indeed I shall, if
Sincere, take some Pains about, to
 I may not *Believe*, or *Disbelieve*, with
 good Reason; and certainly shall, if
 Understanding be good, *Believe*,
 because what I *Believe* is *True*. But
 to *Profess* (not immediately what is
 for I only know *this* by my own *Force*
 what is *True*, but) what, upon *Enquiry*
 the Best I can make, I *Judge* and *Estimate*
 to be *True*. And therefore, if through
vincible Ignorance, or through *Want* of
sufficient Revelation, I cannot bring Me
 to *Believe* Something to be *True*: I
 Honestly *Profess* that Thing; nor
 be condemned by a *Just God* for not
 it. If this be not *Truth*, I know not
 will become of *Natural Religion*,
 all *Those Notions* of the *Nature* and
Attributes of *God*, which are the *Foundations*
 all *Reveled Religion*, and of the *Christian*
Revelation in particular. To suppose
 fore the *Christian Religion* to be *Such*
 we cannot persuade a *Sincere* *Few*
Truth of *It*, is to suppose something
Injurious to the *Religion* it self: as
 suppose that, if it be *such*, (which

the God it is not, and that you do not
 w, (it is,) God will Finally Condemn a
 Person, for not Professing it, is a
 position extremely Injurious to Almight-
 if ed Himself
 A t om hence, the Fallacy of your Way
 representing this Argument (p. 73, 74.)
 ll, i ars, when you would make it to
 ve, thus ; I am not obliged to go to Church,
 Bu se a Conscientious Dissenter will not : I
 t is not obliged to be a Christian, because a
 n J ew cannot embrace Christianity. The
 En ey is this. I am not to do, what I
 nd I ought to do; because He, who
 ous He ought not to do it, does not do
 and ought not to do it, whilst He
 g M is so.
 : I ou seem (p. 74.) to be much Afraid,
 nor making the Terms of the Gospel, and
 not Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, too
 y not Indeed in one Sense, in the Sense
 on, of our Saviour, and in a Sense very differ-
 and from yours, Strait is the Gate, and
 unda now is the Way that leadeth to Life, and
 Ch here be that find it : as the Persecuti-
 pose and Afflictions which sincere Christi-
 Such ave been almost always, in some De-
 tem subject to, are hard for Flesh and Blood
 thing neounter with, and bear up against :
 f : as, where These are wanting, the
 ick ular Passions, and the Vices and
 Tempt-

Temptations of the World are difficult
 struggle with; and as Few, very Few
 fear, take any Great Pains, or are
 ordinarily concerned, to find out the
 Way; or, when They have found it, to
 steadily to it. But in another Sense
 cannot be made too wide: so as to
 in all who sincerely Love God, and Observe
 Commandments. In this Sense, the
 of the Kingdom of Heaven always stand
 open, to all that desire to enter. And
 may safely, without Fear of Man's
 ment, affirm that, as surely as God
 Just and Good, He will never reject
 that truly Love Him, and are Desirous
 coming to Him, but will accept All
 work Righteousness, in the Fear of
 and if any thing more be needful, will
 fallibly reveal it to Them. This Doctrine
 of Sincerity, which his Lordship has taught
 and which Christ taught long before
 will indeed Save all People alike, who
 alike Sincere, in the Way that their
 Swasion, sincerely taken up, leads them
 take. But then it does not follow, as
 would make it (p. 75.) that this Doctrine
 equally favours every Way of Worship;
 less you first suppose, that every Way
 of Worship is equally Good in its self, and
 as a sincere Man may, in the Integrity
 of his Heart, embrace. And then Heed

and Christianity, the Church of Eng-
 land and the Church of Rome, will be All
 One as Good as Another. Here is
 no Employment left for Sincerity;
 only to chuse some Way or other, it
 matters not which Way, to Worship God in
 if Sincerity in chusing which Way be
 necessary: One Way must be Preferable to
 another; and every Man's Conscience is en-
 dowed to Judge which Way is Best, accord-
 ing to the Light it has. And again, if Sin-
 cerity in chusing which Way, be not neces-
 sary, then there can be no Difference in
 Way, from Another: unless you say,
 necessary, tho' not sufficient. If you
 say so; I answer, that you accuse Almight-
 y God of this Hardship; of obliging us to
 see or believe something under the Pen-
 alty of Eternal Damnation, which after
 we have done all that we can, (which, is
 done in Sincerity,) we are not Able to
 see or Believe. So I must leave You,
 the World, to Judge, whether this
 Argument, which you laugh at as his
 Ship's Important Demonstration, proves
 for what you say, that this Demon-
 stration gives the Conscientious Quaker, &c.
 the same Right (I would call it Obliga-
 tion and Duty) to obey Conscience, which
 Nelson had; and They may Justly blame
 any

any Church, or Any Persons, in a Church, that Assume a Power of Censuring them, for obeying their Conscience, as Guiltless of this Heresy against the Nature of Things. I am very free to own the Consequence, and, I confess, (I may perhaps be somewhat short sighted,) I cannot see what Advantageous Conclusion, in Favour of your Doctrine, you can draw from this Conclusion, which, I assure you, I most heartily make.

You have next, one of the most extraordinary Arguments, if I may call it that, I think, I ever met with in my time. You first (p. 75, 76.) suppose the Bishop's Doctrine of Sincerity pretends to alter the Nature and Truth of Things; (which I have shown you, no one ever said, and but only that our Justification, or condemnation in Professing Any Truth, refusing to Profess it, depended, not on the Truth it self, but on our sincere Profession, taken up upon as sincere an Emission concerning It): And then, in Answer to this Invention of your own, you ask, whether Colours and Sounds are not Real, because some People do not see, and hear. And if, to affirm They are Real, is a Heresy against the Nature of Things too? No Instance of Colours and Sounds is very happy: for as there are certainly

Philosophy enough to know this)
 Colours or Sounds, but to Those, who
 hear; as *They* are nothing *Real*, di-
 stinguish'd from our *Sensations*: so may it be
 (tho' I own it would be a very Bad
 Argument to prove the Thing,) that
Adh-Communion is *Necessary* only to
 of it, who *conceive* it to be so, and to
 a *Communion* it appears to be so. If indeed, the
 hearer had affirmed, what you invent for
 it, that our *Conceptions* and *Thoughts*
 st. But the *Nature of Things*: you might
 all argued against Him, from this *To-*
 my but not, as you have put it. You
 e. But have said that, tho' *Colours* and
 alter were only *Sensations*, yet the *Cause*
 which was something *Real*; and as *Co-*
 id in and *Sounds*, (i. e. what we *See* and
 or) do not alter the *Nature* of the
 uth, which cause Them, but may be
 l, none, where some of the *Causes* are,
 re. But a Defect in the *Organ*: so *Church-*
 an *Emion* may have a Good Foundation
 An *Scripture*, tho' we, thro' some Defect
 ask, as in our Understandings, cannot
 t. Receive it to have any. But then this *Argu-*
 hear supposing it were a good One) could
 is a prove it to be *necessary* to Those
 too? do not conceive it to be so: but the
 s. yet it could be stretched to, would be
 inly we there is Reason to *conceive* it to
 be

be so, tho' They do not see it. If
 would prove *Church Communion* to be
 sary, even to Those who do not con
 it to be so, and cannot *conceive* other
 than their Abilities help them : if
 would prove this, I say, from such
 rallel as this about *Colours* and *So*
 You must first make it appear, th
 may be *Necessary*, to see *Colours*, and
Sounds, and to enjoy *Them*, and delig
Them, without having either the *Fa*
 of *Seeing*, or *Hearing* ; or having *Them*
tiated, that They are not sufficien
 that Purpose. And then indeed, yo
 come nearer *Proving* that *Invincible*
rance is no *Excuse* for *Error*, in any
Material Point.

As for your Gross Calumny and
 representation of the Bishop (p.
 where you describe Him, as a *Hear*
vocate for *Error* ; as giving *It* a Powe
every Truth and *Institution* of *Christ*
 of making *the whole Christian Dispensa*
be cancelled, if we have but an *Erroneou*
science : I shall only say this to you
 such *Want* of *Charity*, I am afraid
 be excused only, for proceeding f
Great Degree of *Zeal*, accompanied
 a very *small Degree* of *Light* and *Know*
Unhappily indeed, as you observe
the several Parties of *Christians*

ing for many Ages : More Unhappily,
 this *Disputing* of theirs has not rest-
 Disputing only for a Bare Difference
 in opinion, or in a Mere *Separation* from
 another's *Assemblies*; but has often
 run out into all the *Effects* of *Hatred*,
Will; into *Murder*, and *Torture*,
 the *Destruction* and *Ruin* of whole
 Churches, that differed from Some in the
 Trifle, which *They* thought fit to
 make as *Religion* : and all this, because
 they did not consider, or would not list-
 en to this very *Intelligible Demonstration*,
 of the *Case of an Erroneous Conscience*; be-
 cause they would make *New Doctrines*, of
 their own, *Necessary*, which *Christ* never
 taught; and insist upon Terms of *Church-
 Fellowship*, which *Christ* did not insist up-
 on the *Fellowship*, or *Communion*, which
 (p. required. This has been most of all
 remarkable in the corrupted *Church* of
 Rome. And in This, I hope, no *Protestants*
 can be sure no *True Protestants*, that
 stand on a Good Foundation, can) e-
 ver expect a Glory to imitate *That Church*.
 you amongst our selves have attempted
 this, in Opposition to the *Church* of
 England. They call themselves *Members*, and
 stand on the same Ground that *Church* stands upon;
 and this Lordship has stood up against
 the *Evil Spirit*, that is in Any amongst us,
 S who

who are not properly of us : I am sure
 well deserves, (not for having applied
Engine to the *Destruction of Churches*
 you unfairly represent Him as doing,
 for having employ'd *it* for the *Destruction*
 of humane Tyranny, and of all that is
ed among Men; He deserves, I say
Return of Thanks, from All Good Churches
 of all Churches, who have any Real
 cern for the *Honour* of the Great God
Father of us all, and of our Lord and
 Christ Jesus, for the *Interests* and
 of *His Religion*, and for the *Present*
Future Happiness of their Fellow-Churches
 and Brethren.

You go on (p. 77.) to accuse
 Shop's Doctrine of *defending all Communion*
alike : tho', I have shown you, it is
 nothing, but the *Choice of Him* who
 chuse with whom He will *communion*
 it be *sincere*, tho' it may be *Erroneous*
 this *Choice* not as a *Right Choice*,
 such a *Sincere*, tho' perhaps *Mistaken*
Choice, as will still maintain Him
feareth God, and worketh Righteousness
 the Good Grace and Favour of God
 give Him a Reasonable Ground to
 (not for the *Uncovenanted*, but)
sure Mercies of so *Just*, and so *Good*
 But still you charge this *Doctrine*
defending all Choice of Communion,

or insincere. And to prove that the
 op, with his *Doctrines*, could not con-
 a Jew, a Quaker, or Socinian; you lay
 some *Preliminary Propositions*, which,
 say, *He must lay down, according to*
Doctrine, in order to make a Convert:
 which, you suppose, no Man can
 converted from those *Errors*; but with-
 which, I have already shown you,
 shall further show you, there can be
 ch thing as *Conversion*, nor any *Rea-*
Choice at all, amidst the *differing*
of Worship. I am very glad you
 fixed upon distinct *Propositions*, be-
 I have now an Occasion to call up-
 our *Sincerity*, either to allow *These* of
 bishop, or to maintain the *opposite*
 for one Side of *Them* must be *True*.
 therefore place the Bishop's *Proposi-*
 and *Those* which you must assert if
 oppose Him, over-against One Ano-
 that so it may the more Evident-
 appear which are *True*, and which

*The Propositions
which the Bishop
has laid down, and
which you con-
demn.*

*Prop. 1. We are
neither more nor less
in the Favour of God,
for living in any Par-
ticular Method, or
Way of Worship ;
but purely as we are
Sincere. Preserv. p.
90.*

*Prop. 2. No Church
ought to Unchurch
another, or declare
it out of God's Fa-
vour. Preservat. p.
95.*

*The Proposition
which you
maintain,
Condemn
which the B
has laid down*

*Prop. 1. We
the Favour of
by living in a
ticular Method
Way of Wor
tho' we are In
in living so :
are out of H
vour, by not
in that Par
Method ; tho'
most Sincere,
sincere to kno
Will, and ob
i.e. tho' we fe
and work Ri
ness.*

*Prop. 2. One
may Unchur
other ; and
Men are so far
of God's Fav
to declare wh*

a Right to it, and who have not.

Prop. 3. Nothing us the Favour of God, but a wicked Sincerity. *Ibid.*

Prop. 3. We may lose the Favour of God with the most Perfect Sincerity, if we but chance, thro' Weakness, or Ignorance, or any other Innocent Defect, to Err.

Prop. 4. A Conscientious Person can be in no Danger, for being out of any Particular Church, *rv. p. 90.*

Prop. 4. A Person may be in Danger, for not being in a Particular Church, in which his Conscience will not permit him to be. And a Person ought to profess Himself, and be of a Church, against his Conscience: otherwise He will incur the Wrath of God. And it is either not a Sin, to act against Conscience: or it is True, that God is so hard a Master, that, in that Case, which ever

way we act, He will condemn us; either for acting against our Conscience being, or for acting agreeably to Conscience in being, of a Particular Church.

Prop. 5. Is: (As it should be, and as it is put in the *Preservative*, as I shall shew you when I come to examine your Application of these Propositions:) The Real Perfection or Excellency of any Religion, is not *that* which justifies our adhering to it, but our Personal and Sincere Perswasion. *Preserv. p. 85.*

Prop. 5. Our Personal and Sincere Perswasion, will justify us in adhering to any Religion unless that Religion be actually True; tho' we do not think it to be such, and are to Sincerely acting against our Conscience, to avoid acting by rejecting the True Religion. On the other hand We are not to embrace a Religion which we sincerely and upon the

Examination we can make, believe to be True and Excellent; unless it be actually True in it Self; and, this way too, are to *Sin* on one side, to avoid *Sinning* on the other.

Prop. 6. Christ is King and Law-giver in his Kingdom. No Men have Power of Legislation in it. If we would be good Members of it, we must show our selves Subjects of Christ alone, without any Regard to Man's Judgment.

Prop. 6. Christ is not Sole King and Law-giver in his Kingdom. Men, and Fallible Men, have a Power of Making Laws in Christ's Kingdom, so as to bind the Consciences of his Subjects. To be good Members of Christ's Kingdom, we should show our selves Subjects of Men, equally with Christ; and regard Man's Judgment in Matters of Conscience and Religion, equally with Christ's.

Prop. 7. As Christ's Kingdom is not of

Prop. 7. Though Christ's Kingdom is

this World; so when
Worldly Encourage-
ments are annexed
to it; these are so
many Divisions a-
gainst Christ, and
his own express
Word. *Sermon.*

not of this World
yet it may be
of this World,
Worldly Encour-
agements may be
nixed to it.
tho' Christ exp-
said, His King-
was not of
World; yet, af-
ing that it is
of this World
making no Div-
against Christ,
his own ex-
Words, Or,
Kingdom is of
World, and may
Worldly Encour-
agements annexed
tho' He said,
not of this W
and consequen-
according to
cannot have Wo
Encouragements
nixed to it.

Prop. 8. To pre-
tend to know the
Hearts and Sincerity
of Men, is Nonsense

Prop. 8. To
tend to know
Hearts of Men
Nonsense and A

Wo Absurdity. *Pre-*
p. 93.

Prop. 9. God's
of es are only to
t, afceived immedi-
is f from Himself.
World v. p. 89.

Div
rift,
ex
Or,
s of
may
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is W
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to
e Wo
ments

To
now
Men
nd A

dity: For Men now
a-Days have Infalli-
bility to know Them
by; or may know
Them without In-
fallibility, *i. e.* with-
out knowing Them.

Prop. 9. God's
Graces are not to be
received from God a-
lone. But He has
given them into the
Hands of Men, to
dispose of them as
They please, without
giving Them Infalli-
bility, to teach Them
to dispose of them
according to His Will.
We are to expect
God's Graces from
Men, Fallible Men,
and not from God
Himself. Man, and
not God, is to be
our Judge, Finally
to Absolve or Con-
demn us. And if we
are so Happy as to
escape the Censures
of some Men, we
need

need not fear
 Anger of God
 if we displease
 Men, All our S
 rity, all our F
 of the Favou
 God, are Vain
 we obey his
 never so ex
 Nay, God has
 liged Himself
 Acquitt or Con
 us, as Those F
 Men shall thi
 to determine
 Condition.

You call these his *Lordship's* own
frictions, expressed in his own Terms, in
 any *Exaggeration*: but I must observe
 you, that it would have agreed
 with this Declaration, to have use
 ner the Bishop's own Words; which
 have made clearer, what Your Pro
 leaves more obscure. But *Propositio*
 most Unfairly represented (p. 78.);
 nothing like what the Bishop to
 His Lordship, when He makes *All*
 pend on Personal Perswasion (p. 85. P
 &c.), does not, by *All*, mean *True*
Falshood, *Right* and *Wrong*, in the

selves; but *All* our *Justification*.
 therefore, I grant, that as *We* left the
Doctrines, not because they were actually
 so, but because we thought Them so,
 I verily believe We thought so on
 good Reasons;) so the same Reason
 justify any one else, in leaving Our
 Religion, how True soever its Doctrines are,
 if He is Sincerely, and upon good
 Consideration, perswaded that They are not
 good and Christian Doctrines: and tho'
 he may be mistaken in his Judgment, He
 is justified in his Conduct. But there
 is such Consequence to be drawn from
 this Doctrine, as that which you have
 in your own Imagination; that
 there is no Real Perfection or Excel-
 lency in Religion, but it is Right or Wrong,
 according to our Perswasions about it: for
 our Perswasions and Sincerity have nothing
 to do with the Thing it self, but only with
 our Justification before God. And tho,
 that a Religion's being really Excellent,
 does not have a Reasonable Perswasion to
 induce it: yet we may have a Justifica-
 tion, tho' Erroneous, Perswasion; as That
 depends on our Sincerity, and not on the
 Truth of the Thing it self. Nay, on the
 contrary, if Sincerity be of such High Va-
 lue with God, He must have given us
 a Religion that was really Good and
 Excellent.

Excellent, to try our *Sincerity* whereas if all *Religions* were alike *ble*, there would be no Room for *Sim* to make a *Choice*. If you are *ref* here to contradict his Lordship in He affirms, you must maintain the *trary* of what He affirms; and Boldly that *suppose A Papist, not perswaded* *Corruption of His Church, to separate* is justified, tho' He wants that *P* *fion*, because it is *True* in it self that *Church* is corrupt; tho' He pursues *Truth as Falshood*, and Believing it *Falshood*; And that, on the other *Suppose a Protestant, or one thorough* *vinced of that Corruption, to separate* is not Justified in so doing; unless *likewise the Truth of the Thing* *fide*; and is some way or other more *tain of that Truth*, than his *thorough* *swafion* does, or his Judgment can, him.

But now I am to consider your *Ap* *tion of the Propositions (p. 79.)*; you call upon his Lordship, to be *soon as He pleases, either with a Q* *Socinian, or Jew*; and promise to *whatsoever Argument he uses to convert* from these *his own Propositions*.

Will he tell a Jew, that Christ *is necessary to Salvation?* He (the

answer, from Proposition 1. that we are
 the Favour of God, not by a particular
 but purely as we are Sincere. But I
 reply: therefore it is, that I recom-
 mend to you this *Particular Way*; because,
 you are *Desirous* to know, and to obey
 the Truth, that *Desire* will lead you to
 the *Particular Way of Christianity*: and I
 advise Him to enquire diligently,
 without Prejudice, lest otherwise He
 injure his *Sincerity*, and by so do-
 ing justly offend God. How you would
 give to such an Answer of a Jew, on your
 principles, I cannot see.

You go on to speak for the Bishop, and
 say *The Truth of Christianity is so well*
known, that there is no Excuse left for Un-
believers: and then you make the Jew to
 answer from Proposition 5. (which I have
 said you to be, as you have stated it, an
 assertion of your own, and not any thing
 contrary to the Bishop's Assertion, but the very
 contrary to it,) *That all Religion is found-*
ed on Personal Perswasion, that as your Lord-
does not believe that Christ is come, be-
cause He is actually come, but because you
say He is come; so He does not disbelieve
because He is not actually come, but
because He thinks He is not come. But here
 you make the Bishop speak a kind of Non-
 sense, that, I am sure, He never spoke;
 that

that He *Believes*, because He *thinks*,
Believes, because He *Believes*. The
shop said, *We left Popery*, because
thought it Corrupt: and to make the
the same, you should have put it
Obeys Christ, because *We Believe Him*
Think Him to be our Lord and Ma
and not because *He* is actually so
this we *Know* only, as far as we *Be*
it. I defy you to give any Other R
to a Jew, or to *Any One*, for *obeying* C
than this, That *He thinks He* ou
Obeys Him. Unless He is made to
so, *Arguments* are of no Use to Him
Arguments are only used to make
think so. It is the *Reason* and *Evi*
you have that *Christ is come*, that m
you *Believe* that *He is come*; and not
Thinking that *He is come*, the *Reason*
Evidence which makes you *Believe*
He is come; as you ridiculously p
If there were no *Reason* or *Evi*
on one side or the other, (which
is on the side of *Christ's being* c
there could be no *Perswasion*; and c
quently no *Religion*, since *Religion* is
Acting upon *Perswasion*. And the B
evidently, by this *Argument* He uses
the *Papists*, supposes a *Difference* in O
ligion from *Another*: as *That* without v
there could no *Sincerity* in *Chusing*
P

erring the *Christian Religion*; nor even
Perswasion at all about it. And there-
 tho' the Bishop's *Argument* be a good
 against a *Papist* accusing Him for
 ing *Popery*: yet it would be a Bad
 in a Jew's Mouth; unless, on *Supposi-*
 of his *Real Sincerity*, and the *Inabili-*
 of Him who endeavours to convert
 to give Him such *Proof* and *Evi-*
 of *Christianity*, as must affect his
 ience and *Sincerity*; which must re-
 on *Christianity* it self, or on the *Con-*
 er, or else on the Understanding only
 he *Person* to be *Converted*, and not
 ll on his *Justification* in the Sight of

you describe his Lordship next (*p. 80.*),
 turning his *Discourse* to a Quaker, and
 ing him *Reasons* for *Embracing* the *Do-*
 es of the Church of England; And you
 m that *He cannot have better Success*,
 He had with the Jew; (with whom
 ve shown you, He could have had
 es upon *His Principles* only;) and
 every *Argument*, which He can urge,
 lly answered from His own *Propositi-*
 And here you premise, what I have
 dy shown you to be a gross Mistake,
 I shall repeat it again,) *That his Lord-*
 allows nothing to the *Truth* of *Doctrines*,
 be *Excellency* of any *Communion* as such;
 where-

whereas His Lordship plainly supposes
 That *Truth* and *Excellency*, in making
Sincerity That which justifies before
 For were there nothing *True* and *Excellent*
 between *Two Sides* of a *Question*;
 could be no *Sincerity* in *Choosing* a
 It would be exactly the same as to
Science, which *Side* was taken. It would
 in that Case indeed, be *Demonstrable*
 no *Church* or *Communion* could have any
Advantage over another; nor any thing to
 swade a *Sensible Man*, to exchange any
Communion for another: Nor would there
 any *Sincerity* in preferring one *Side* to
 other, but through the *Appearance* of
 a *Difference*; which to Him, that *Sincerity*
 thinks there is, is the very same as if
 really were, *Such a Difference*. And there-
 fore, (as I have often repeated, and re-
 peat now again,) a Man having no
 wherewithal to judge of the *Truth* or
Excellency of any *Doctrine* or *Communion*
 but his own *Judgment* and *Understanding*
 just as Good, or as Bad as it is: He
 in *Conscience* be only obliged to follow
Sincerely the *Judgment* He makes on both
 the *Reasons* on *Both Sides*; and to take
 such *Pains*, as an *Honest* or *Wise Man*
 take, to *Examine* fairly and without
Judice. Whereas, on the other Hand,
Sincerity will not justify us before

can never be assured that we are justifi-
 cation before Him : and it is all one to us,
 whether we embrace *Truth* or *Falshood* ;
 since we can only know *Truth* from
 God by our own Judgment ; and can
 satisfy our own Conscience, in that
 manner, by following what we think to be
 right, and by rejecting what we think to
 be wrong. And therefore if *Sincerity* be not
 present, we have nothing to do, but to
 cast down in Despair of ever finding Ac-
 cession with the *Best* and most *Merciful*
 Father in the Universe.

Now you come to his Lordship's *Argu-*
 ment, such as You please to make it,
Similia Quaker. And you ask, *Will his*
Lordship tell a Quaker that there is any
in that Particular Way that He is
can answer from Prop. 1, 3, 4. That
no Person cannot be in Danger
going out of any Particular Church. But
 not suppose his Lordship to say any
 thing to a *Quaker*, but on supposition,
 that the *Quaker* is *Insincere* ; (which He
 will tell Him that He is, not fee-
 ble Heart ;) and that He either alrea-
 dy believes the contrary to what He pro-
 fesses, or will not hear Reason ; but Wil-
 lingly and *Insincerely* shuts his Ears against
Truth, and blinds Himself on Pur-
 suit with Prejudice ; (which neither do I

T

sup-

suppose his Lordship would take Him to affirm of Another, unless He look into his Breast, and discern his Inward Thoughts : or else, He would ly give Him such *Reasons*, as might a his *Conscience*, and work upon his *Sin* ty ; and would only tell Him in Ge that *Sincerity* was necessary ; and that might be in *Danger*, not from being *Particular Way*, but for taking up a *cular Way* too lightly, and without Pains to Examine, as a Prudent and cere Man should take in *Matters* of Greatest Importance to Him, such as *nal Salvation* is ; that is to say, for *Insincere*, if He be so, which only His own *Conscience* can know, without *ent Certainty* to pass a *Decisive* Judgment about it.

You go on, will your Lordship tell me, that his Religion is condemned by the Universal Church ? He can answer from Proposition 2. That no Church ought to Unchurch her, or declare it out of God's Favor will never, on any Supposition, that his Lordship would bring such Argument, as this, that can only supposition, and all the Worst Corruptions of Religion ; and that has really no manner of Weight in it. The Answer, that you give from Proposition 2, would be a very weak Judge.

and could not be answer'd; and
 d be to the same Purpose with that
 Apostle, (Rom. xiv. 4.), *Who art thou
 judgest another Man's Servant? To his
 Master He standeth or falleth.* It would
 be the Shame of a Protestant, and of a
 Christian, who owns but one Judge in
 Matters, to urge so weak and so
 Christian an Argument.

You ask, (p. 81.), *Will you tell Him,
 Christ has instituted Sacraments, as ne-
 cessary Means of Grace, which He neglects to
 give? He will answer from Proposition 9.
 God's Graces are only to be receiv'd im-
 mediately from Himself.* I would reply: so
 be; and yet this does not contra-
 dict observing a Positive Institution of
 Christ. But if I could not convince his
 Opponent, that the Sacraments were such
 necessary Institutions; I would not take upon me to
 tell him, that they were Absolutely
 necessary to Him: For That would depend
 on his Sincerity, in believing Them to be,
 and believing Them to be, Ordinances of
 God, of which Sincerity of his, I am not
 Judge. I should apply to my self,
 and Case, what St. James said, (James
 2.2.), *He that judgeth his Brother,
 transgresseth the Law; but if Thou Judge the
 Law, thou art not a Doer of the Law,
 therefore thou art not a Judge.* There is One Law giver, who

is able to save and to destroy: Who art
that Judgest another?

The next *Affertion*, which you
the Bishop's Mouth is not less Extr
nary, and is as *Ill-founded* as the
Will your Lordship (say you) tel
that He displeases God, by not holding
ral Articles of Faith, which Christ
quired us to Believe? And you ma
Quaker reply from Proposition 3, That
looses us the Favour of God, but a
Insincerity. And a very Good
it is: for Christ requires us to
no Article of Faith, but such as He
sufficiently Reveled to us, in such a
ner, that, if we act *sincerely*, we
reject it: in which Case, our own
ence, and not that of other Men,
ther excuse or condemn us; over
Conscience Christ is the only Judge
is solely appointed to determine
Matter. Christ has no where req
to believe, what we do not Believe
cannot, in Conscience and Sincerit
fess: and it is most Absurd to suppose
to have required either such an Im
ty, or such a Dishonesty. And t
the Answer of the Quaker is suffici
lence an Adversary, who cannot
his Inmost Thoughts: but is no
tion of Himself in the Sight of God

really, what He pretends to be,
 e. The Reply you make for Him
Proposition 5, I have already fully
 red ; and shewn not to be the Bi-
 Sense, nor indeed any Sense at all.
 your Lordship tell Him He is sincere?
 He can reply, you say, from *Proposi-*
ding, (and a very good Reply it would
 be that to assume to know the Hearts, and
 of Men, is Nonsense and Blasphemy.
 to tell any Man, He is sincere, is ei-
 to assume *Infallibility*, which is *Blas-*
 ; or to pretend to see his Heart,
 to know his Secret Thoughts, without It,
 is Nonsense.
 last Argument, which you make his
 ip (whom you seem to take a Great
 in representing as a very weak
 en,) to use against the Quaker is,
 He ought to conform to a Church esta-
 by the Laws of the Land. I verily
 his Lordship would never chuse
 speak his Sense of Things, or to
 in his Name, who could once think
 g such an Argument as this, of a
 Establishment : an Argument that is
 a Good in Defence of any Religion,
 or False, in any Country where It is
 ed. But his Lordship has already
 to the World what Arguments He
 use in the Case of Separation, by

Those which He actually has used
 Dispute that He was engaged in with
Dissenters: where He never brings for-
 sufficient an Argument for *Conformity*,
Law made for *it* by the *Civil* So-
 which has nothing to do with Co-
 ence; but argues constantly from
 Peace, and Love, and Quietness,
 the want of such *Conformity*, should
 indeed, but unhappily actually do
 some Circumstances, interrupt and dis-
 and only endeavours to prove to the
sciencies of sincere *Dissenters*, that the
 of *Communion*, which They scruple
 not in Themselves *Unlawful*; nor the
ferences betwixt Them and Us of
 Consequence; with the Disturbance
 Peace and Charity, which, by the
 quity of Men who cannot bear to
 thers should dissent from them in the
 Trifling Matters that seem to regard
 ligion, is too often made to follow
 The Answer which you put in the Qu-
 Mouth (p. 82.), is indeed what a
 may well be supposed to make: but
 every Honest Man, that is of the
 of *England*, must deny. If indeed
 Church of *England* were Guilty of
 pish Claims, as your Representation
 make It Guilty of; of denying
 Sole Kingship, and Power of Legisla-

Kingdom, and setting up for *that Power* themselves; of *Deciding*, against Christ's Express Declaration, that *his Kingdom is of this World*, and may have *Worldly Arrangements annex'd to it*: If *It* were Guilty of This, as some pretend *It* is, I say, it would be the Duty of every *Christian* to separate from *It*, and to shew *Themselves Subjects to Christ alone*; when *Others* begin to Erect a *Throne and Tribunal* as *His*, and to make *Themselves* in *his Kingdom*, equally with *Him*. This is the Point in Dispute between *Us*, the *Quakers*: and denying This, is the only Justification of the *Church of England* from what we esteem Aspersions, therefore the Supposition, upon which *Thy* Answer you make for the *Quaker* is founded, is the most Injurious (and, I contend, the most Groundless) Reason on the *Church*, which you pretend to defend; and would fully Justify, not the *Sincerity*, but the Reasonableness Grounds also of *Their Separation* from *the Church*, which, on that Supposition, will be as *Corrupt* and as *Blasphemous* as *the Church of Rome* it self. If there were better Arguments to be brought in Defence of *our Church*, than These which have put in *his Lordship's Mouth*; (I say only to make *Him* argue ridiculously;)

lously;) there would be I believe, and am sure there ought to be, *No Convert*. *It*. But, I hope, our Church is to be defended on a much better Foot: and I think, the Bishop Himself has defended in a much better, and, I am certain quite different Manner, from that, which you have here put upon Him, without any manner of Commission, I dare from Him, to make Him Reason so Inconclusively.

I shall only observe one Thing on this Subject: and that is, that seem to have the *Church of England* continually running before your (whether because you may think to some Advantage to your Cause in the Minds of the Weak, by often sounding *His Name* or for any other Reason, I can tell,) that you bring *It* in here (*p. 82.*), which it is most Absurd, and shocking to hear named; and inform us very Gravely, *His Lordship cannot urge any Argument either Jew, Heretick, or Schismatick, for the Truth, the Advantage, or Necessity of embracing the Doctrines of the Church of England.* As if it were, the *Doctrines of the Particular Church*, that Unbelievers are to be converted to, and not the *Doctrine of Christ Himself*: and as if a *Jew* was to be called upon to become a *Christian*.

and to become a *Member* of our *Church* of
 and. As if a Man was first to List
 be self into a *Particular Church*, and then
 and That *Church* learn the *Doctrines* of
 and *Christianity*; the Consequence of which
 naturally is, that the *Doctrines* of that
Particular Church, are by that Means made
 upon Him, for the certain *Doctrines*
 of *Christ* Himself. I have as great a Re-
 as I can have to any humane Ap-
 pment, for our *Church* of *England*; and
 as much as any One, in the great
 iness, and Freedom, and Advantages,
 we enjoy in *It*: but then cannot,
 without withdrawing my closest Obligati-
 to our Blessed *Saviour*, own *It*, for a
 of *Truth*, or for a *Centre* of *Uni-*
 to which *Jews* must come, and submit
 themselves, in order to Their being *Chri-*
), to which all *Christians* are to bow
 and worship, in order to avoid the
 of *Heresy* and *Schism*. And I have too
 a *Regard* to *It*, to suppose *It* ex-
 such *Homage*, or sets up the same
 which *It* severely condemned in
 corrupted *Church* of *Rome*, and for
It justly separated from *It*; and
 by whomsoever, or in what *Church*
Doctrines pretended to, are equally Enor-
 and *Anti-Christian*, and equally
 of all *Foundation* and *Support*,
 either

either from *Scripture*, or from *Common Sense*.

You complain grievously of being treated as *Papistly* affected for asserting *Truths*, which the *Papists* joyn with you in asserting. But you mistake the Charge. You are accused, not of asserting *Truths*, but of asserting *False Doctrines*, which they joyn with you in asserting: not of joyn with the *Papists*, in retaining the *Apostles Creed*, and the *Sacraments*, (you should have said, the *Two Sacraments*,) which are retained by the *Church of Rome*: but of joyn with *Them* in the grossest *Corruptions*, the most *Impious Claims*, which *They* insisted upon; which only support the *Papist Superstition*, and destroy the *Foundation of the Reformation*; and we therefore, till you first Fairly quit *Hold*, and Renounce *Protestantism*, cannot Consistently assert.

I have already, over and over again considered your Charge against the *Shop's Doctrines*; that *They Serve* and support the *Jews*, the *Quakers*, or *Socinians*, the *Church of England*, and the *Church of Rome* all alike: and have shewn you, that your Assertion is, either a great Compliment to all *Sects of Religion*, in supposing *Them* to have equal Argument in Their Favour, so that a Man may, upon the best E

he can make, chuse Any one of Them,
 Venture, with Sincerity : or is a very
 Compliment to Them All, in suppo-
 sing Them All equally Ill-Grounded : or
 is the greatest Affront to God, in sup-
 posing Him to require of Men to judge
 of Things, than the Faculties which
 He has given Them enable Them to do ;
 to Act contrary to the Judgment and
 Understanding which He has given Them
 to be Their Guide and Conductor in all
 their Actions ; and so to condemn Them
 for Judging and Acting in the Best
 manner They are capable of.
 You intended, it seems, (p. 83.) ; to have
 considered his Lordship's Doctrine, concern-
 ing the Repugnancy of Temporal Encourage-
 ments to the Nature of Christ's Kingdom :
 this Doctrine, you think, has been so
 confuted ; and the Consistency and
 Reasonableness of Guarding this Spiritual
 Kingdom with Humane Laws, has been de-
 monstrated with so much Perspicuity and Strength
 of Argument, by the Judicious and Learned
 of Chichester ; that you presume this
 part of the Controversy is Finally determin-
 ed. The Controversy it self, and the Ar-
 guments on Both Sides, lie open to all
 eyes that will read. And therefore it im-
 ports very little to Others, what Judg-
 ment a Private Person passes about it.
 But

But it is much more Fair and Reasonable to allow the World around us to Judge Themselves, on which Part the *Perspicuity and Strength of Argument* lies; we have most *fully confuted Objections*, have best stood by, and defended our own *Positions*; and, if it be to be *sumed* that *this Part of the Controversy* finally determined, on which side of Question it is determined.



The CONCLUSION.

I Have now gone through your *Letter*; and have, I think, neglected nothing of *Argument*, or even *Appearance of Argument*, that I have found in it: I have plainly shewn every One of *Them* to be mere Fallacy and Mistake; or Misrepresentation and Abuse of the *Bishop's Reasoning*. But, as I could not think sufficient to confute your *Objections* (which would be only Answering *You*, might leave the *Subject* still in the Dark. I have frequently taken Occasion, from your *Mistakes*, to examine the *Foundations* of *Them*, the *Principles* on which they stand; and to shew you, that Those

a *sandy Foundation*, as will bear no
 a *Superstructure*, as you raise from
 em. And so I have endeavoured to
 ove, not only your *Objections*, but
 wise to obviate all *possible Objections* on
 a *Principles*, by removing the *Princi-*
 Themselves, which are the *Foundation*
 must rest upon. And this I have the
 re earnestly endeavoured to do; because
 rily believed it was doing Service to the
 rests of *Christianity*, to rescue *It* from
 misrepresentation of *Its Doctrines*, which
 such a Heavy Load upon *It*, as must
 e necessarily (if it has not already
 e it) destroyed the *small Remains* of
 th, in the Minds of many Rational
 Thinking Men; who might have
 n led, by the most False, and Unjust
 cription of *It*, to believe that *It* e-
 used, and taught Those Absurd *Do-*
 nes and *Commandments* of *Men*, for *Do-*
 nes and *Commandments* of *God*, and of
 ist: and must in the Bulk of Mankind,
 e gone a great Way to root out all
 ions of even *Natural Religion*; and all
 as of the *Nature* and *Attributes* of our
 at and Good *God*, and *Father*; by fix-
 upon *Him* the grossest of All Absur-
 es, and supposing *Him* to give His
 ces, the *Pardon* of *Sins*, and the *Eter-*
Salvation of His *Creatures*, into the
 Hands

Hands, and into the Power of *Fall*
 and *Weak*, and *Passionate*, and even so
 times *Wicked*, Men ; who would be th
 by empowered to lord it over, and in
 and sport with *Those* to whom He has
 pressly promised *Salvation*, through his
 loved Son *Christ Jesus*, on certain *Te*
 which He has laid before Them pla
 in his *Gospel* ; and not on the *Humour*
Fancies of *Others* their *Fellow-Creat*
 or on Their *Compliance* with any *Terms*
 bearing patiently any *Heavy Bur*
 which those *Others* may think fit to
 upon Them. This, I hope, I have
 proved not to be so ; both from the *S*
tures, and from our *Natural Notion*
God. I have shewn, that *there* *Christ*
 spoken of, as our only *Priest* and *Me*
tor with his *Father* : that *God's Graces*,
Pardon of *Sins*, and our *Salvation*, is
 made to depend wholly on our *Ac*
Sincerely, and according to our *Consci*
 through the *Mediation* and *Intercession*
Christ : that the *Christian Religion* is
 otherwise necessary to *Salvation*, tha
 It is so clearly and evidently *Reveled*,
 in *Sincerity* we cannot resist the *Argum*
 in Its Favour : that of this *Sincerity*,
 alone is Judge ; and has appointed C
 finally to pass an *Absolving* or *Condem*
 Sentence upon Us, according to this

Sincerity : that those whom He has
 ured *Infallible* may declare, in this
 the Matter of Fact, if They know
 but that even They have no *Authority*
 solve or Condemn, with a *Judicial* or
 ive Sentence : but that *Fallible Men*,
 thus Assisted, can neither declare the
 er of Fact, which They do not know,
 pass any *Decisive* Sentence of this Na-
 in a Case, where They are not, and
 or be, Proper Judges : and that there-
 Humane Benedictions, Humane Abso-
 ns, Humane Denunciations, Humane
 mmunications, have nothing to do with
 Favour or Anger of God ; and that every
 of Us is to give an Account of Himself
 d, our Father, who knows the Thoughts
 en ; and Jesus Christ, his Beloved Son,
 om it is peculiarly reserved, to bring
 ht the Hidden Things of Darkness, and
 ke manifest the Counsels of the Heart.
 or. Preserv. &c.)
 and now to conclude the Whole : I
 call solemnly upon You, either Sin-
 y to own your Errors, and retrieve
 injury, which you have done (I hope,
 am perswaded, unwillingly) to Chri-
 ity, and even to all Possible Religion, or
 rd to God : or else, Sincerely, and with-
 Evasion, to answer these Arguments,
 shew that your *Notions*, have not
 these

these Fatal Effects to the Destruction of *Religion*, and the *Honour* of *God*, and our Blessed *Saviour*, which I have laid on Them. If you can do this last promise you Publickly to own it, and ask your Pardon for this Accusation; to embrace, and even to contend for, *Notions*, if, on Examination, I find to be *True*. But, in Case you cannot will not do This: I must call as Solers on the *Clergy* of this *Church*, to disavow loudly such Injurious Representation of *Them*, of the *Religion* They profess in the *Church* which They are Zealous of, and of the *Honour* of *Almighty God* of his *Christ*, whose Servants and Successors They call Themselves; and to oppose *Them*, not with mere *Authority*, (which often supports *Error* and *Falshood*, and verbeares *Truth*, but can never serve the *Cause* of *Truth* and *Religion*,) but with *Reason* and *Argument*, which are the *Weapons* of the *Gospel*; and to warn the *Flocks*, (as it is their Proper Office and Employment so to do,) against the *Dangerous* and *New Doctrines*, which tend, if They are permitted to gain Ground, in the *Ruin* of all *Religion* and of every thing that is Valuable amongst Men; and openly to disown such Impious and Anti-Christians C

are only the Product of the Foulest
 Corruption of *Christianity*, in the darkest
 of it. And upon all *Christians*, of
 all Ranks and Degrees, I call; if they have
 any Regard or Value, for the *Honour* of
 God and Father, or of their great
 Lord and Master; if They have any Sense
 of the vast Advantages of his *Religion*,
 of the great Offers of *Salvation* in his
 Word; not to suffer themselves to be de-
 ceived by the *Vain Words*, and *Vain Pre-
 tences* of *Fallible Men*, like Themselves,
 pretend that They are the only *Ar-
 biters* and *Judges* of *Religion*, into a Belief,
 that their *Salvation* depends on any Thing
 which they have in their Power to grant, or
 withhold: but to stand Fast in the
 Faith with which God and Christ have
 made us free; to depend on God alone, and
 his Beloved Son, for their *Eternal Sal-
 vation*; to place it only, where God and
 Christ have placed it, on their Compliance
 with the *Terms* of the *Gospel*, and not on
 their own Will; depends upon the *Will* of *Men*; and
 not to be deterred, either by the *Outcries*
 or *Threats* of *Men*, or even by the
 Spectacular *Terrors* They may at any
 Time put into their Hands to compel Them
 from Acting in all Things with
 the most *Sincerity*, and according to
 their *Conscience*; remembering that They
 are

are finally to be judged by their *Great*
as They shall have acted agreeably
disagreeably, to the Dictates of The
Conscience, and not That of Other
And upon that Part of Christians in
ticular, who boast of the Name of
stants, I call; if They have any
or Concern for the *Blessings* of the
mation, for their Deliverance from th
dage and Thick Darkness of *Popery*
to suffer Themselves, to be Insensib
back to the grossest Corruptions
and to be bereaved of their most F
Rational Religion, by espousing
which must wear away by Degre
very Foundation of the *Reformation*
and at once destroys all Possible Ju
tion of our *Separation* from the C
Rome, or of our Continuing in the
ration: but vigorously to stand up
firmly to adhere to Those *Princip*
which alone the *Reformation*, *Chri*
or even *Natural Religion* can subsist
lastly, I beseech our Great God and
so to enlighten us, and assist us all
Inquiries after These Important
that we may neither be misled by
dice on the one Side or the oth
be Frighten'd by any Worldly
from speaking the most necessary
it is in *Christ Jesus*: that we may

be ever ready to acknowledge that
 when we see it; and not be ashamed
 own our own *Errors* and *Frailties*; but
 give *Glory* to *God*, and to his *Truth*:
 so his *True Religion* may at length
 ve in the *World*, when it shall be no
 er *Clouded* and *Darkened* by the
 ons, or *Interests*, or *Prejudices* of *Men*;
 may shine forth again in its *True*
 ntness, and have the *True Effects*,
 h It was designed to bring forth:
 that, by this *Means*, we may be all
 are against the *Time* when the *Ma-*
 shall knock at the *Door*; and may be
 l, not *beating our Fellow-Servants*, and
 g and *drinking with the Drunken*; but
Wise, and *Faithful Servants*, whom
 Lord shall commend and reward.





POSTSCRIPT



THE *Answers* which you make to your *Postscript* to Some *Objections*, which you have only to answer, being *Evasions* of the Point in Question, *entering* the State of it, or *Misrepresenting* the *Objections* themselves, or *gross* *stakes*: I shall, before I take my leave of you, spend a few Pages more examining *Them* thoroughly; and shew that *They* are just what I represented to be.

I have already shewn you, that your *Arguments*, from the Necessity of a *Divine Commission*, to qualify any one to exercise the *Priestly Office* (p. 86.), or to ordain any Persons *Priests of God* (p. 87.); that same Necessity of a *Divine Commission* (all I Express Commission, I mean,) to qualify any one to *Officiate in Holy Orders* as Ministers of *Christians*, i. e. to *Officiate* and *Minister* in those *Ordinances*, which God has appointed *Christians* to observe for the sake of *External Decency* and *Order*.

which is all that such a *Ministry* can
 necessary for:) are wholly Inconclu-
 and Insufficient for your Purpose;
Christian Priesthood, and the *Order of*
 being totally Distinct things, and
 no Relation to one another. For
 proved, I hope, clearly, that *Christ*
 self, in his own Person, is the Sole
Priest, properly so called; and
 the Sole *Priest*, in the Full and
 Signification of the Word, that ever
 the World; all former *Priesthoods*
 only *Emblems* and *Types* of *His*.
 from thence it follows that, tho', if
 were any such thing as the *Priestly*
 distinct from *That* which rests in
 the Single Person of *Christ*, or any *Priests*
 besides *Christ* Himself; a *Divine*
Commission would be requisite to qualify any
 exercising that Office; and an *Unin-*
terrupted Succession would be likewise ne-
 cessary to prove this *Commission* to Those
 to exercise the Office, on suppo-
 (7.); that this *Commission* was to descend
 through all Ages; yet, there being no such
 as this *Priestly Office*, excepting that
 rests in the Single Person of *Christ*,
Ministers of God, but *Christ* Himself;
 can be no Necessity of a *Divine Com-*
 mission to qualify any to exercise an Office,
 and They are not to exercise, and which

They cannot be possessed of; and consequently no *Necessity* for such an *Uninterrupted Succession*, as is sometimes dreamt of. The *Office* of the *Clergy* being not like to this *Priestly Office*, but totally distinct from it, and vastly inferior to it, requires no such *Express Commission*, as the *Priest* does; nor consequently any such *Succession* to deliver it down from Hand to Hand, but it is sufficient, that *It* is for the Benefit of *Christian Churches* or *Congregations*; and must therefore, as long as it is so, be approved of by God, and is called His *Ordinance*; just as *Civil Government*, which is the *Ordinance* of *Man*, is the *Ordinance* of *God* likewise, because it is most Beneficial to Mankind.

This Foundation of all your *Misconceptions* being thus removed, I shall proceed to consider the *Answers* you make to the *Objections* against the *Doctrine* of an *Uninterrupted Succession*; which, I shall shew to be mere *Evasions* of the Point in Question, or evident *Misrepresentations* of the *Objections* Themselves. To proceed therefore :

THE 1st *Objection* was; That no *Mention* made of this *Succession* in *Scripture*, not only as having any *Relation* to the *Being* of a *Church*, (as you put it) but as having any *Relation* at all to it, even as to its *Well-Being*.

to this *Objection* you answer, 1st, By
 g upon it some Absurd Consequences,
 you suppose to them be; and 2dly, by
 ting that, tho' this Doctrine of Suc-
 ons be not founded in *Express Terms*,
 der Plain Commands, of Scripture; yet
 founded in Scripture, as it may be ga-
 d thence; and is asserted by the Uni-
 Voice of Tradition, in the First and
 eding Ages of the Church.

The Absurd Consequences, which you
 d fix on this *Objection*, are Three:
 (p. 87.) that on this Rule, Of re-
 g nothing but what is mentioned in
 ure, we must reject another True Do-
 likewise, That the Scriptures con-
 all things necessary to Salvation, or
 88.) That they are a standing Rule of
 in all Ages; since this Doctrine is no
 e mentioned in Scripture. But the
 tion was not only that Successions
 not mentioned in Scripture; but that
 could not be concluded thence; and
 there was not the least Intimation,
 y thing that looked that way, to be
 therein. But besides, the Case of
 riptures being the Standing Rule of
 is totally different from the Case of
 ions. The Belief of this Truth, That
 riptures contain the Rule of Faith,
 wholly from the Nature and Necess-

sity of the Thing it self: and the Truth
 of that *Affertion* depends on the same
 arguments, that prove the Authentick
 and Truth of the *Scriptures* themselves.
 But, without the greatest Absurdness
 cannot be insisted upon, that the *Scriptures*
 should have mentioned Themselves
 as containing the only *Rule of Faith*
 more than that *They* should have men-
 tioned Themselves, as being *True* and *Authen-
 tick*: because such *Affertions* concern
 Themselves would not have made the
 matter at all more *Evident*; but would have
 left it to be judged of, and determined
 by the *Reason* of the Thing, and by *His-
 torical Evidence*, as much as if *They* had asserted
 nothing concerning Themselves. The
 Truth of those *Books*, and Their containing
 the *Rule of Faith*, stand or fall together, ac-
 cording to the *Evidence* on which *They* are
 proved, and not according to what *Those*
 affirm of Themselves. If *Faith* in *Chri-
 st* be required of Us; and if all that we
 are to believe (with any Certainty sufficient to govern
 our Belief and Practise upon) of the *Doctrines*
 of *Christ*, be from *Those* *Books*, then the
Rule of Faith can only be found in
Those *Books*; and whatever is not to be
 learned from *There*, can be no *Rule of Faith*.
 I say, the *Rule of Faith* can only be
 found in *Those* *Books*; because *Those*

themselves are not, properly speaking,
 the *Rule*; but Contain the *Rule*, i. e.
 contain Those *Doctrines*, which are the
fundamentals of Christianity, and which
 Christians, who are truly Such, must
 receive and Believe; and because no *Do-*
ctrines, not contained *therein*, are of this
Faith; and consequently No True *Rule*
Faith is any where else to be found.
 Then here lies the Difference between
 the Case of the *Scriptures* containing the
of Faith, and the Case of *Successions*:
 in the *Former*, we are left to our Na-
 tural Reasoning, from Historical Evidence,
Historical Arguments, to a Matter of Fact,
 which our Belief is entirely founded;
 which we are to judge, (as in all
 Matters of Fact that are long past,) to
 the best of our Abilities, according to the
 Evidence before us; Whereas in the *lat-*
ter, when this *Rule of Belief* is once set-
 tled, and we Receive it upon sufficient, or
 it appears to us sufficient, Evidence, all
 particular *Doctrines* contained therein, are
 Judged of by this *Rule*; and are to
 be brought to this *Test*, to be tried whe-
 ther they are contained therein, or may
 be evidently concluded, or not;
 from thence to be determined, whe-
 ther they are *Matters of Faith*, or not.
last is the Case of *Regular Successions*.

If

If Those *Niceties* are really *Doctrines* of the Christian Religion, They are Particular *Doctrines* of It, and not the *Foundation* on which It stands; and, should therefore rest upon the *Foundation*, and be expressly mentioned in, or be an evident Consequence from, that *Rule*, which the *Foundation* supports, and which is all that is to be laid upon It: i. e. They ought to be either expressly mentioned in Scripture, or most plainly concluded therefrom. Till you prove that They are so, (which hitherto you have never done, nor, I think, ever will do,) your Answer is wholly foreign to the Purpose. It is not at all such an Answer, as it would be to any One, who, speaking of some Building, should deny that Such a Pillar is such an Ornament, was to be found in the Building; you should answer, that it was not necessary that every Thing which was a Part of a Building should be contained in the Building it self; because the Ground, on which the Building stood, was not contained in the Building it self.

The *Second* Absurd Consequence, which you would fix on this *Objection*, is: if it be a good Argument against the Necessity of Episcopal Ordainers, (it should have been, Of the Uninterrupted Succession of Episcopal Ordainers,) that it is never so

ture, that there shall be always such
 iners ; it is certainly as Conclusive a-
 st the Use (it should have been, The
 ssity) of the Sacraments in every Age,
 it is no where said in Scripture, they
 be Used in All Ages (p. 89, 90.). As
 the Necessity of the Sacraments, I have,
 ope, fully examined that Matter a-
 e ; and thither I will refer you, to a
 Repetition. But, here again, you
 take the Objection ; as if it had been
 , that Regular Uninterrupted Successions
 not said to be Necessary in express
 ds of Scripture : whereas the Objecti-
 as, that Successions are neither spoken
 here at all, nor in the least hinted at,
 intimated ; nor can be any ways con-
 ed from thence. Now, the Sacraments
 Both of them, Instituted, in express
 ds, by our Saviour Himself ; and from
 Manner and Design of his Institution,
 from the Nature of the Thing, it may
 concluded, that They are to continue
 ll Ages, i. e. as long as Christianity it
 continues. For Baptism, which was
 ointed by Christ, to be the Outward
 of embracing His Religion, must be
 tinued, as long as the Reason of the
 ng requires it ; i. e. as long as Any are
 embrace the Christian Religion, and to
 ome Professors of it ; as long as Chri-
 stianity

stianity is a *Religion* to be Embrace
 which it will be until *Christ's* Seco
 Coming. The *Lord's Supper* was appoi
 ed, as a Constant *Memorial* of our *Lo*
Death; and therefore was to last as long
 it should be necessary, that *this Death* sho
 be remembred by such *Outward Signs* a
Tokens; i. e. as long as Men were to
 main in this Frail and Mortal Conditio
 and should stand in need of such *Visible A*
ons, to remind them of the *Benefits* Th
 received through *Christ*, and the *Obligat*
 They lie under to Him. But here, Th
 which the Reason and End of the Insti
 tion it self teaches us, is farther confirm
 to us by the Express Declaration of
 Apostlé *Paul* (1 Cor. xi. 26.), (and He
 received of the *Lord* what He delivered
 Them v. 23.), That as often as We eat
 Bread, and drink this Cup, We shew
Lord's Death till He come. Here the C
 is very different from That of *Succession*
 for here is a Positive Institution, in
 press Words, the End and Design of wh
 leads us to continue the Obseryance of
 and even, in one Institution, the Expr
 Declaration of an *Apostle*, speaking wh
 he had heard from our *Lord*. But in t
 the Case of *Successions*, 1st. There is no
stitution at all, in any Words, or to be co
 cluded from any Words, for that whi

be the *Original* of the *Succession*; or,
 ere was, there is no Reasoning from
 Nature of the Thing, which can lead
 the Necessity of a *Succession* from that
Original. The *Apostles* and First *Preachers* of
Gospel could not be the Head, or Original
 of this *Succession*; because *Their* Commission
 somewhat Peculiar to Themselves;
 devolved on None after them, as I
 shewn before: They had no *Successors*
 no *Heirs*, in the Apostolical or Evan-
 gelical Office. They were sent, by *Christ*,
 to preach his *Gospel* to all Nations. They
 accordingly preached it; and fully open-
 ed the *Terms* of it to the World. When
 they had done this, there was nothing
 for Others after them to do, of this
 kind. All Men had the *Offers* and *Terms* of
 the *Gospel* before them; and needed no fur-
 ther Preaching, to make them understand
 it. To suppose the contrary, is to
 suppose that the *Gospel* was not fully Re-
 vealed by *Christ* and his *Apostles*; but was
 only revealed by *Them* only in Part, and was
 to be more fully revealed by Others that
 were to come after *Them*: which directly
 contradicts the most Solemn Protestation
 of St. Paul to the *Elders* of *Ephesus* (*Acts*
 20.), that He had not shunned to de-
 clare to them all the Counsel of God; and is
 contrary to the whole Tenor of the *Writings*
 of

of the *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, who profess to have written, (as *St. John* in particular in his *Gospel*, xx. 31.) Men might believe that *Jesus* is the *Son of God*, and that *Believing* might have *Life* in his *Name*, or to the same Effect; i. e. that Men might learn from *Them* every Thing that was *Necessary*, in order to obtain *Life* and *Salvation*; and consequently, that no *Necessary* might be left *Unknown*, though perhaps afterwards to be *Reveled*. Therefore, this *Commission* of Delivering to the *World* the *Gospel* and the *Terms* of *Salvation*, being peculiar to the *Apostles* and *mediate Disciples* of *Christ*, and given singly to *Them* in their own Persons. They having no *Successors* in this *Office*. None can, with any *Ground*, pretend to derive *This Office* in a *Regular Succession* from *Them*. All the *Office*, that any *Ministry* in the *Christian Church* can claim, is; To *Exhort* and *Advise*, and remind Men of their *Duty*, and of the *Terms* of the *Gospel*, which are already before their *Eyes*, but which They often neglect or forget. If you can prove, (which I verily believe you cannot), that this last *Office* was a *Positive Institution* of *Christ Himself*; or was *ordained* by the *Apostles* as *Such*, or under

Notion, than as being Expedient,
 for the greater Edification of the
 Church, and not as of the Essence of it:
 could indeed follow, from the Nature
 of the Thing, that this Office was Necessa-
 ry to be continued thro' *All Ages*, as much
 as the *Sacraments* are. But it would not,
 by any Means, follow from thence, that
 this Office, tho' it be to be kept up thro'
All Ages, yet must be kept up in the Par-
 ticular Method of *Regular Uninterrupted*
Succession; unless that Particular Method
 be likewise *Instituted*: because it may
 be kept up many other Ways, without a-
 ny such *Nicety*. And therefore your Ar-
 guments drawn from the *Sacraments*, In-
 stituted by Christ, have no Relation to
 this Office of the Clergy, not Instituted by
 Him; nor to their *Regular Succession*, which
 is Instituted by Him, nor could be
 concluded from the Institution of the Of-
 fice itself, supposing that were Instituted
 by Him. I shall examine the *Foundation*
 of this Office of the Clergy more particular-
 ly when I come to examine your second
 Answer to the *Objection*.
 The *Third Absurdity*, which you would fix
 on the *Objection*, is; that, if no Government or
 Order of the Clergy be to be held necessary, be-
 cause no such Necessity is asserted in Scripture; it
 certainly concludes as strongly against (it
 should

should have been, the *Necessity of*
Government, and the Order it self, as any
any Particular Order (p. 90.). Now
 pass over the same Mistake of the Ob-
 ject in this Answer, which was in the
 former Ones; that the *Objection* was,
 Things not being asserted in *Scripture*
 whereas it was, Its being neither *Asserted*
 nor *Implied* in, nor to be concluded
Scripture, which quite alters the State
 the Question: to pass this by, I shall
 reply to this Answer, 1st, That, supposing
 this did conclude, not simply against
 against the *Necessity of, Government and*
Order it self, it is no Absurdity; it is
 true, that *Government* is not *Necessary*
 or of the *Essence of, the Church*, but
 ly One of the *Contingent Attributes of*
Church, if it be so much; (as Mr. A.
 expresses it in his *Miscellanies*, p. 1.
Outward Government, I mean with
 and not that *Inward Government*, by
 which *Christ reigns in the Hearts of his Elect*
vindicates them from Spiritual Enemies.
 2dly, the Conclusion is not just. For
Government and Order may be *Necessary*
 supposing it to be for the *Edification of*
Christians; because we have *General*
Directions in Scripture, to do every thing
Order, and Decently, and to *Edify*
 from whence it may be concluded,

Argument is Necessary, if from the Circumstances it clearly appears, that it is requisite to that Order, and Decency, and Education: tho' Particular Orders can be thence concluded to be necessary; as it can be first plainly shewn, that One Particular Order, and no Other, serve Those Ends.

In Answer to the Objection, you assert, that, tho' this Doctrine of the Necessity of an Uninterrupted Succession and of the Clergy be not founded in Express Terms, or under plain Commands, of Scripture; yet it is a Truth founded in Reason, as it may be gathered thence; and is asserted by the Universal Voice of the Church, in the First and Succeeding Ages (p. 91.). As for the latter part of your Argument, relating to Tradition, I only reply; that the Voice of Tradition is a very Bad Rule for finding out Truth, and if closely followed, would lead us into all the Absurdities that have ever dreamt of by Men. When our Saviour appeared, the superstitious Corruptors of the Jewish Religion, had the Tradition with Them: and our Lord reflects on no one Thing more than on this, that the Scribes and Pharisees taught the Traditions of Men, for adding to the Commandments of God; and

that They had made the *Law of God*
no Effect by their *Traditions*. When
Apostles, in the Name of *Christ*, preached
 the *Gospel* to the several Nations of
 Earth, the *Superstition of Heathenism*,
 the *Voice of Tradition* on its Side against
 Them: and, if All Men had stedfastly
 adhered to *That Rule*, it must have
 actually quenched all the Light, which
 the *Gospel* was endeavouring to introduce.
 When the *Reformation* began to break
 the Peaceable Possession of the Popes by
 ruptions, it was to this *Voice of Tradition*
 the Papists appealed, finding that *Rea-*
son and *Reason* would not serve their
 Turn: and They certainly had the
 their Side, for many of the *Saccer-*
dos of the Church; and They pretended
 it, tho' without Foundation, from
First. But when the *Protestants* came
 answer this Argument, They who
 led the *Reformation* with the
 Strength, (as was avowed by Those
 never were esteemed Enemies to the
 of *England*.) thought the best Way
 move Arguments taken from such
 Matters, was to shew that the *Scriptures*
 contained the only *Rule of Faith*
 and that *Tradition* was a Thing
 uncertain and obscure Nature, that
 hard to find out on which Side

tion it lay: that, tho' it might be
 eyed down to us in *Writings* and
 ments, scattered in many different
 s, as the *Scriptures* were, or might be
 convey down to us such *Writings* and
 ments: yet, in any Particular *Points*
of Doctrine, Those who are the suppos'd In-
 vents of conveying it to us, appear
 ve been such unfit Judges of those
 ; so often contradict not only one
 er, but even Themselves, that we
 ve no Security in depending on any
 They affirm of that Kind, nor can
 know actually what it is that They
 instantly affirm: and that therefore
 ice of *Tradition* cannot be the *Rule*
 h, tho' it may indeed convey *That*
 Us; but that we must come to the
 res, as containing the only *Rule*,
 e can with any Assurance depend
 And therefore, I hope, we shall
 e more hear the *Voice of Tradition*
 as a *Rule of Belief*, to Protestants
 ians.

ing thus set aside this Part of your
 I shall next examine how you
 his *Doctrine*, of the *Necessity of Suc-*
 to be a *Truth founded in Scripture*,
 to be gathered thence. First you
 n, by Way of Premises, this *Truth*
 , *That the Priesthood is a Positive*

*Institution, and that no Man can take Office unto Himself, till He have God's express Commission for that Purpose: and you conclude (p. 92.), very justly, if Men are called to this Office by it is, in that Case, to be esteemed a Positive Institution. All this is True; but you change the State of the Question, and Substitute the Order of the Clergy for the Argument, instead of the Priesthood, which you had only argued about (as you do p. 92.); and take it for granted, as a necessary Consequence, that the Priesthood, (the Proper Priesthood) mean, for no other Notion of it was here, your Assertions being only *That,*) must be a *Positive Institution* of God's, the Order of the Clergy must be likewise: what you have said of the Head of the Priesthood, is just as much the Purpose, as if any One should say thus; No Man could be King of the Jewish Nation, but whom God immediately appointed; therefore if God appointed a Man to be King of the Jews, that Man must be esteemed a *Positive Institution*; and you should apply this Argument to prove that no Man can be King of England, till God immediately appoints Him to that Office by his *Positive Institution*; and no Man can be King of the Jews*

a *Positive Institution*. As much, nay more, different is a *Priest of God*, in the Sense of *Scripture*, a *Sacrificer*, from a *Minister*, an *Elder*, or One of the Order of *Clergy*, (as I have, I hope, very fully shewn above;) there being nothing in their *Offices*, that can make *Them* in the least resemble one-another, as in the Office of a *King* there is. All your Arguing, on the Three next Pages, from this Pre-supposition, to the Necessity of certain Degrees, and a Regular Succession, in the Order of the *Clergy*, is only Begging the Question, and falls to the Ground, this Supposition being one remov'd. For, tho', there were any such Thing Instituted, as a Real and Proper *Priesthood*, deriv'd from that in *Christ's* own Person, and to go down from one to another in the same manner, (*i. e.* to be *uninterruptedly* continued;) it must be so carry'd on, by *uninterrupted Successions*; and *They* would, on that supposition, be the *Positive Institution* of God: yet, there being no such Thing Instituted by God, but the very contrary shewn in Scripture, (as I have shewn above;) and the Order of the *Clergy* being quite distinct from, and bearing no resemblance to, the *Priesthood*, in the Sense of *Scripture*; you can conclude no Necessity of a *Positive Institution* of God's, and

less of an *uninterrupted Succession* to it on, from what would be *Necessary* the Former Supposition.

But, tho' this be a sufficient Answer to all Mr. Law's Arguments: yet I think myself obliged to look further, and in to clear up this whole Matter, to mine fairly these *Two Points*; 1st, whether the *Order of the Clergy* be a *Positive Institution* of God's; and 2^{dly}, whether supposing that it is, an *uninterrupted Succession* be necessary to carry on and continue *That Order*.

I. In order to know whether the *Order of the Clergy* be a *Positive Institution* of God's, we must consider when, and where *That Order* began. And, first, we must remember, (what I have above proposed) that the *Apostles* were not, properly speaking, of *This Order* at all; but were of an *Order* vastly Superior to it, and of which none before or since ever were: they had the *Word of Truth* committed to them, and had the *Infallible Spirit of God* directed them in *Their* dispensing it. They once for all proposed to the world, in the Name of their Master, the *Being* of the Gospel, and of *Salvation* by it: that none after Them were to add to it, or diminish from it, as They had received that, therefore, all that is to be *Believed*.

Done, by *Christians* is contained in
Writings, which *They* left behind
 em, to the End that *Christians* might
 know, and practise their Duty. And,
 therefore, *secondly*, Any Order, that was
 instituted, distinct from *Theirs*, cannot
 be in a natural Succession from the Or-
 der which *They* were of; but must arise,
 either from the Express Institution of *Christ*
 himself, or from an Institution of *Theirs*
 in His Name, and in Pursuance of His
 Command to *Them*; or only from *Their*
 essential Settlement of the Church, ac-
 cording to the Circumstances of the Time;
 which *They* did not make Necessary
 for of the Essence of, the Church. This
 I think, is the True State of the
 matter, as we never find any Mention of
 any Order, in any of the Discourses re-
 ceived from the Mouth of our Blessed Sa-
 viour Himself; nor the Apostles ever men-
 tioning it, or recommending it, under
 the Notion of an Institution of our Savi-
 our, or as a Thing absolutely necessary
 to the Being of the Church; but only as
 a thing very useful to it, and for its
 better Being. And, therefore, *They* ordain-
 ed Elders in every City; and sent others to
 do the same; And Those Elders, whom
They did so ordain, are said to be made
 Overseers over the Flock by the Holy Ghost;

either as being *ordained* to that Office, *Infallible Persons*; or as having been c
 ed to that Office, in some singular Man
 as *Saul* and *Barnabas* were (*Acts xiii*
&c.). But had *This Order* been absol
 ly Necessary to, and of the Essence of
Church; it is impossible to imagine, *A*
Apostles would have neglected to warn
stians, and particularly the *Bishops* w
 They appointed, to take Care to contin
 down to others after Them; and to
 Them All sensible of the Great Dang
 omitting it. But nothing of this Na
 is to be met with in any of their Ep
 to the *Churches*; or to Those Private
 sons, to whom it was most Natur
 think They should have been very
 cular in such Directions; and to
 They are most nicely Particular in
 other Things, relating to this very
 of appointing *Elders*. This is most
 countable in Them, and really Inc
 of Them; that *They, who kept back*
that was Profitable from Those to
 they preached the Gospel, (*Acts xx*
 should, in this Case, keep back so
 tant a Point, as you suppose the
Institution of the Order of the Cler
 be; and the Necessity of keeping
 qual to that of keeping up the
 ments expressly appointed by

edly, therefore, the only Foundation
 of the Order of the Clergy rests upon is
 Man: That as the Apostles acting Pruden-
 tly, and for the Greatest Benefit of the
 Churches They planted, ordained Elders
 or Overseers in Them; and settled a kind
 of Church-Government for the Time, but
 such They did not require Christians to
 be to forever: (As appears by the Go-
 vernment of a College of Presbyters, with-
 out a Bishop, at Jerusalem, after the Death
 of James, and during the Life of several
 of the Apostles Themselves; for which ne-
 cessity we do not find They were ever
 condemned by any of Them, as departing
 from the Divine Institution; and which the
 Example of the Hebrews plainly approves
 to exhorting the Christians at Jerusalem to
 obey THEM that had the Rule over them, or
 any other that were to guide them, (as it is sup-
 posed) as the Apostles, in this Matter, acted
 Incidentally, and according to present
 Circumstances; so They left the Christi-
 ans after Them to their full Liberty of
 continuing, or altering, the Form of Ex-
 ecutive Government, as Circumstances should
 require; and did not bind it down upon
 them by any Express Command or Law.
 If the Circumstances remaining general-
 ly the same in the succeeding Ages, the
 Christians thought, very justly, that the
 Form

Form settled by the *Apostles* was the *Best* as the *Apostles* had such *Wisdom* from above, as directed Them to the most proper and wise Method of maintaining order and *Decency*, and of *Edifying* Churches. But then, as in some Cases the Circumstances did alter, so there the *Christians* deviated from the *Form* and *Method* of the *Apostles*; as in the Case of the *Order* of *Deaconesses*, which was wholly laid aside, because of the Offence which Those of that *Order* gave to the *Heathens* around them. So now, tho' We of this Country judging, from the Circumstances we were in, that a *Form* of *External Government* like that settled by the *Apostles* was most *Expedient* and *Beneficial* to *Christians* here, were in the Right to refer here to that *Form*, which was delivered to us, tho' much corrupted and spoiled in the *Church* of *Rome*, which we then refused for its *Tyranny*, and *Impositions*, and *Unchristianism*: yet far be it from us, to condemn the *Foreign Churches*, who left us that corrupted *Church* of *Rome*; nor judging, I suppose, likewise from Circumstances, thought it *Expedient* to leave it. At the same time, the *Form* of *Government* which had been before observed, now which was in the Possession of Those who vehemently and cruelly oppose Their

forming Themselves; or even any Prote-
 ction amongst our selves, who may pro-
 fess, (and not seeing their Hearts, we
 ought, according to all Rules of Charity,
 believe them,) that They sincerely
 think that *Form of Government*, which We
 were here to, unlawful; and what They
 cannot with a safe Conscience submit to.
 For as the *Apostles* laid no very great
 stress on Matters of this Nature: so nei-
 ther ought we to lay more; however in
 the Right, and however justifiable we
 may be, in adhering to the *Form* we ad-
 here to. But, if we will shew our selves
 True Imitators of the *Apostles*, we
 shall always keep to that One Rule, which
 they laid down, and which They always
 observed Themselves; of doing every
 thing to *Edification*, and with a Regard to
 the Increase of Mutual Charity, and True
 Christianity: and in lesser Matters, which
 are of Importance only as They promote
 or obstruct This, we shall always act, as
 the Circumstances lead us to see which is
 the most likely Method to serve this
 Great End. But, supposing that This Order were
 a Positive Institution of Gods; how does it
 follow, that Uninterrupted Succession is the
 most likely way, and Necessary to carry on, and
 to continue This Order? Unless you first sup-
 pose

pose *that* to be a *Part* of the *Institution* which is begging the Question, and which it lies on you to prove. But, without the *Supposition*, (which would be a very *Fallacy* One, there being no Mention ever on made of such *Regular Succession* in Scripture that *Consequence* does not follow. For, other *Ways* may be thought of, to continue that *Order*, besides the *Way Successions*; That *Way* cannot be necessary and the only One. Now other *Ways* may certainly be found out; as the *Church*, *Congregation's* appointing always to themselves a *Pastor*; and on His Decease, on His Malversation, appointing *Another* without the Intervention of any other *Church*, or *Pastor*. I believe, many other *Ways* may be invented, upon Supposition that it were necessary to continue the *Order*, as an *Institution* of God's. I need not this, to depreciate our present *Method* which I verily believe to be as good, and as near to *that* of the most Primitive Times, as any now practised in *Christianity*: but to remove the *Fatal Consequences* that would follow, upon Supposition that *Regular Uninterrupted Succession* were the only *Method*, and necessary to the *Being* of a *Church*, to the Disturbance of the Consciences of many sincere Christians with *Endless Genealogies*, which They

never come to any degree of *Moral*
 tainty about; and in particular, to the
 Being of our own Church, which
 plainly broke through this *Succession*,
 when it separated from the corrupted
 Church of Rome: and to remove all that
 charitableness, which leads some to Un-
 lessen and Damn All that differ from Them,
 to the following this Particular *Method*.
 I, besides, I say it, to justify our Go-
 vernment, when, some Years ago, it was
 and necessary, in order to preserve Li-
 berty and every Thing that is Valuable to
 to deprive some of the *Bishops*, who
 were declared Enemies to our *Civil Consti-*
 tution, and to place Others in their Room;
 those Bishops who upon that were cal-
 led by our Adversaries *Schismatics*, and de-
 clared to be Unqualified to perform any Mi-
 nisterial Function in the Church, to any
 good Effect. And this *Calumny* I an-
 swer, by shewing them that, supposing
 (not granting) the utmost that They
 pretend to, yet what They would
 suppose does not follow: that, tho' the Or-
 der of the Clergy be supposed to be an In-
 stitution of God's, yet *Uninterrupted Suc-*
 cession, unless that be proved to be a Part
 of the Institution, may not be so; as it does
 not at all follow from the Nature of the
 thing, that such Succession is the only,

and

and necessary *Method* for preserving, continuing *That Institution*.

From hence appears the Weakness of your arguing from *Timothy's* being sent to *Ephesus* to ordain Elders (p. 93. &c.), the Necessity of a Succession of such Ordainers, as *He* was. For, First, you proceed on a wrong Supposition (p. 93.); that *Scriptures* make it NECESSARY that *Timothy* (or some Bishop) should be sent to *Ephesus* to ordain Priests, (i. e. Presbyters or Elders), because the Priests that were there could not ordain. This Supposition is doubly wrong: both, as the *Scriptures* are wholly silent of any such NECESSITY; and as *Timothy* might have been sent by *St. Paul* to *Ephesus*, because it was expedient for the Church in that Place, that He should be sent to Ordain Elders in It, without supposing a Necessity, which *St. Paul* never so much as intimates, when He speaks of His having sent Him thither: and besides, as, upon Supposition that it was Necessary that *Timothy* should be sent to *Ephesus* to ordain Priests, it does not follow, that it was Necessary for the Reason you give, because the Priests that were there could not Ordain; because it might have been Necessary on many other Reasons, besides that of His being a Bishop, as you call Him. If this Matter were

g, *Necessity*, and so *Essential*, as you as-
 it to be, without any manner of
 of or *Foundation in Scripture*; I can-
 but think, that some of the *Apo-*
 at least the *Author* to the *Hebrews*,
 would have taken Notice of the Inter-
 of the *Episcopal Order* at *Jerusalem*,
 ing the Time in which that Church
 governed by a *College of Presbyters*.
 the great Silence concerning this
 (ording to you) Fatal Interruption of
Regular Succession, is an Evidence to
 that, tho' the *Apostles* settled the
Episcopal Order in some Churches, as what
 are to *Them* from Circumstances to
 most Expedient; yet They did not
 make it a Matter of such *Necessity*, or so
 partial to the *Being* of a Church, as to
 allow directly any Change of it, where
 difference of Circumstances might ren-
 der it Expedient to alter it, either wholly,
 or only for a Season. This Groundless
 supposition, on which all your Argument
 depends, being thus removed; your
 Evidence from This (*p. 94.*), in Favour
 of the *Necessity* of an *Episcopal Succession*,
 falls to the Ground of its self.
 Secondly, on Supposition that it was
 NECESSARY that *Timothy* should be sent
 to *Epheesus*, it does not
 follow, (as you would conclude,) that
Timothy

Timothy must necessarily have a Succession of this Power or Office, and that a Constant Uninterrupted Succession from Him is Necessary: unless it be first proved that He sent, because None below his Order, who a Bishop, could perform the Office of Ordering (p. 92.); and that the same Inability in All below that Order of which He was to continue in all After-Ages. the Scriptures neither teach that Timothy or Persons of his Order, could alone perform in that Age: or if They did, it would amount to teaching plainly, that the Successors of that Order can alone ordain any Age; because This is no Consequence from That: and consequently the Scriptures do not plainly teach a Necessity of apostolical Succession (p. 94.), or of any Succession like it.

I need not take Notice that here (p. 94.) You frame a Kind of a Syllogism and from somewhat that is true of the Proper Priesthood, conclude to something of the Clergy which is totally distinct from the Priesthood, and has nothing to do with it: and so unluckily leave Four Terms upon your Syllogism, which is enough to confound any Syllogism in the World.

But when you go on to parallel your Case of the *Ephesians*, supposed to be a Person sent to Them by an Apostle, as

cular Directions, and a Particular
 mission from *Him*; with the Case of
 rs, afterwards rejecting *Persons*, whom
 call *Timothy's Successors*, who had no
 Commission, and no such Direction:
 really seem to have forgot, or laid
 all Principles and Rules of Reason-
 and make it the same Crime, to re-
 the Express Order of an *Apostle*, and
 ect the Pretence that some after *Him*
 set up, without any the like *Autho-*

HAVING thus answered your main
 ders to the *First Objection*; I shall next
 er your Answer to an Objection,
 as you have stated it, is really an
 tion wholly of your own framing.
 affirm, (p. 95.) that *the great Objection*
Doctrine is, that this Episcopal Order
Clergy is only an Apostolical Pra-
and seeing all Apostolical Practises
of binding to Us, sure this need not.
 this was not the Objection: for the
 tion was, that this was one of the
ical Practises which They did Not
 upon us as absolutely Necessary;
 only, as you put it, that *It* might
 not be so. And therefore it still
 you to prove, that *This* was an
ical Practise, fixed upon us by the
 as a Practise absolutely Necess-
 Y sary

sary to be always observed by Christ
 And therefore I lay aside the First Branch
 of your Answer to this Objection
 wholly foreign to the Question; and
 allow you *that, tho' all Apostolical Practices*
are not necessary, yet some may be Necessary.
 And still you are to prove this to be
 of the Necessary *Apostolical Practices*
 I am entirely agreed with you, when
 you say, p. 98. (and I shall transcribe
 your Words, because I think them very
 precious,) that "We are to follow the
 " *Practices* of the Apostles, as we ought
 " to follow every thing else, with Direction
 " and Judgment, and not run headlong
 " into every thing They did, because
 " they were Apostles; nor yet think, that
 " because we need not practise after
 " them in every thing, we need do it in
 " every thing. We best imitate them,
 " when we act upon such Reasons as They
 " acted upon; and neither make the
 " *Occasional Practices* Perpetual Laws
 " nor break through such general Rules
 " which will always have the same Reason
 " to be observed." I own, and con-
 " sent with you, that we are to judge
 " of *Apostolical Practices* must be observed
 " and what may be laid aside;
 " and know *Articles of Faith* from
 " *Truths*; *Occasional Doctrines* from

all Doctrines; that is, from the Nature of the Things, from the Tenor of scripture: I leave out, what you add, the Testimony of Antiquity; because I never, as a Christian, submit to that *Sufficient Rule*, or indeed as any Rule of Faith or Practice; tho' I am persuaded that, if we were to examine *Antiquity* carefully and impartially, you would find no great Strength from thence to support Your Cause. But, as it is no good Argument on One Side or the Other, it is better, I think, to pass it over in Silence.

The Second Branch of your Argument (8.) is confounding again Two very distinct Things, the *Clergy* and the *Priesthood*. And therefore all your Reasoning of the Nature of the *Priesthood*, (which we above shewn you to be only vested in the Person of *Christ Jesus*;) and from the *Changeableness* of that *Priesthood*; to the *Necessity* and *Unalterableness* of *Episcopacy*, which is but a Mode of *Clergy*: is only deduced from the Nature of One Thing, to the Nature of another Thing wholly distinct, and most different from it; and consequently proves Nothing. And therefore your *Divine Unalterable Right of Episcopacy*, if it be not founded merely and only upon *Apostolical Practice*, is founded on Nothing at all: it being Impossible

ble that the Nature of the Christian Pre-
hood, a quite different thing, should be
Foundation of it; when it has no ma-
of Relation to it.

I COME now to examine your
swer to the II^d Objection (p. 100.); which
is, as you put it, *That this Uninterrupted*
Succession is subject to so great Uncertainty
that if it be necessary, we can never finally
are of the Church: you should have
in a State of Salvation; for so the Ob-
on was put. Now, in Answer to this
say, Uninterrupted Succession stands
Historical Evidence, just as Christianity
the Canon of Scripture does. But the
stion remains, whether it does so, or
and whether the Evidence be sufficient
this Case, as it is in the other. I
already had Occasion to shew the
rence, between the conveying down
a Practice as This; and the convey-
down Books and Parchments, trans-
and scattered through many different
opposite Hands, and Doctrines con-
in those Books: And, I hope, I have
you, that the One is very easy and
ficable, and the other Morally Im-
ble upon all your Principles. And
not sufficient to ask, as you do (p. 100.)
When, or how, or where this Succession
or seemed to break, or was likely to

it lies on you to shew any Possible way
 how it should ever be certain, or even
 manely probable, to us, that it has not
 often broke in *Sixteen Ages* of the
 Church; before you can, with any Face,
 require others to believe it.

But since you attempt something like
 (p. 102.), nay contend that it is
really Impossible it should have been broken
 all that *Term of Years*, from the *Apostles*
 the *Present Times*: I shall examine
 your Proofs for this great Assertion,
 and enquire into the Truth of the Matter.
 I say, *This Doctrine*, (that no Ordina-
 tion was *Valid* but that of *Bishops*,) has
 a constant Guard upon the *Episcopal*
Succession. And this you endeavour to
 support, by representing the *Impossibility*
 of *sealing a Bishoprick* in England, or *forg-*
ing Orders.

I own it is next to Impossible to
 seal a *Bishoprick* in England, or even a
 considerable *Benefice*, by *forging Orders*.
 How often have Men stole into Cura-
 cy, and, I believe, sometimes into *Bene-*
fices, by such *Forgeries*, and performed
 Ministerial Offices? And if any
 thing ever has happened, what De-
 cision might it have made in the Church
 of Christ, according to your Principles?
 Can tell where it stop'd? Who knows

but the Bishop who ordains him, ordained or baptized Himself by Forgers; or by Those who were ordained or baptized by such; and so on continually: What Security, or rational Assurance, can any Man have, if his Salvation depends on these *Niceties*?

But, 2^{dly}, not only *Forging Orders*, *Schism* or *Heresy*, according to those Principles the Bishop was writing against, nulls *Orders*, and all *Functions* attending them, from such Persons. This will lead us into a new Maze, Inextricable and Endless: and This depends on what Man can be certain about. How the *Orders* came over into *England* none can tell, with any kind of Probability, whether from *Orthodox* or *Hereticks*, whether from *Schismaticks* or *Catholicks*. In the Dark Ages of the Church may be produced of this sort, we can yet less know. We cannot know, who amongst our *Antecessors* are True and Genuine *Christians*, according to this Scheme: For many of our most Valued Church Men have been baptized by *Presbyters* not *Episcopally* Ordained during the Civil Wars; and many baptized, and Ordained by Those who were so baptized. And who then can be certain indeed? A Man may obey all the Precepts of the Gospel, comply with all the

and yet, for want of this Important
 essor, eternally perish. What Ideas
 Those, who can entertain such Chi-
 as, have of a *Wife* and a *Good God*;
 en They confine Him within the Bounds
 their own Narrow and Cramp'd Noti-
 s?
 dly. This does not appear to have
 a *received Doctrine in every Age of*
Church, that no Ordination was valid
that of Bishops. In the Apostles Age
 is not a Word of any such *Validity*
Invalidity. The great Mr. *Dodwell*
 self, who was One of the greatest
 enders of the *Divine Right of Episco-*
 if I remember right, places the Rise
 Episcopacy, as now understood, in the
 nd Century, which He pretends to have
 as much Inspired as the *First.* The
 ch of *Jerusalem*, we know, continued
 Time without a Bishop, and proba-
 during that Time the *Presbyters* or-
 ed, and did every Function, that a
 op could have done. Many other
 rches are mentioned as settled by the
 sles, and remaining some Time
 out any Bishop, in our Sense of the
 d; which could not have happen'd if
 Apostles had esteem'd this Matter ne-
 ary. But it is plain, that any certain
 particular Form of Church Order and

Government was never look'd upon, as a
 Matter Necessary to Salvation, or Essential
 to the Being of a Church; till Men, when
 they were freed from the continual Danger
 of Persecution, and felt themselves in
 ease, and intrenched within the Fence
 the Temporal Power, began to indulge
 their Luxurious Fancies, in Inventing a
 new Method, and setting up every Notion
 that tended to the Enlarging their
 Glory, and Dominion, and Wealth, and
 Religion, and every thing Excellent
 and Valuable, fell a Sacrifice to Insatiable
 Pride, Ambition, and Covetousness. When
 then indeed They began to traffick in
 Souls and Bodies of Mankind: and in
 swading ignorant and simple People, that
 their Salvation depended on a certain
 of Men, even Themselves, easily prevail'd
 upon them to cast every thing else
 to their Hands, in order to obtain it.
 But I shall extend my self no farther
 in this shameful and melancholly Part of
 History. I shall only further observe
 the Head, One of your gross Misrepresentations
 of the Bishop; and justify His Lordship
 from the Calumny you ridiculously
 cast upon Him.

You tell us (p. 100.) that his Lordship
 says, (p. 80. of the *Preserv. &c.*) that
Papists have one Regular Appointment

interim

a, interrupted Succession of Bishops, undefil'd
 the Touch of Lay Hands. And upon
 you extend your self for Three Pages
 reproaching the Bishop for his Kind-
 elves to the Church of Rome; for allowing
 to Them, which He refuses to his own
 Church. One would really imagine here
 the Bishop had been a strenuous Assert-
 of the Uninterrupted Line of Succession
 the Romish Church: and that He had
 up for it in That Church, with as
 Zeal, as He had opposed it in our
 Country. But to any One who will be at the
 to read over that Part of the *Preser-*
ve, it will appear that the whole Bent
 the Bishop's Argument, was against
 Necessity of Succession in any Church,
 either in England, or in Popish Countries;
 that what He says (p. 80.) of the
 of Rome, is only arguing *ad homi-*
 upon the Supposition of the *Princi-*
 which He was expressly opposing;
 which is a very common and a very strong
 way of arguing, to show somewhat to be
 false, from those very Principles by which
 is pretended to be proved True. The
 Bishop is plainly (p. 80. of the *Preserva-*
) making the Absurdity of the *Princi-*
 He is arguing against, appear from the
 Principles Themselves. With this Design
 observes an Inconsistency and Self-
 Con-

Condemnation, in Those who adhere
 Those Principles. He tells Them, that
 according to Their Principles, the Pope
 have one Regular Appointment, and an un-
 interrupted Succession; and They have another
 and He instances particularly (p. 81.) in
 England and Ireland, where between the
 Church, and the Popish Church, Altar is set
 up against Altar, and Church against Church,
 and one Succession of Bishops against another.
 And then He presses Them home with the
 Absurdity following hence; that since
 Both those Successions cannot be truly
 Regular Appointment; and since they, are
 either in England nor Ireland, ever
 condemned the Popish Church, as the
 Church; nor declared its Ordinances, as the
 nor its Succession, Irregular, or Insignificant.
 It must follow that their New Protestant
 Churches, cannot be truly Churches, if
 their Ordinances Valid and Good; because
 Their Church, and Their Ordinances, are
 set up in Opposition to a Church, and to
 Ordinances, and to a Succession, which they
 own to be True, Valid, and Regular.
 Now, how this Way of Arguing is
 Proof that the Bishop really allows the
 Church of Rome to have a truly un-
 interrupted Succession in it, I leave all the
 World to judge. I may as reasonably
 affirm that you are, in some Matters, a

ere Bishop's Opinion; because you some-
 times endeavour to show that Absurdities
 Page from his Principles. But when you
 put it all upon our wanting *Episcopal Or-*
ordination at the Reformation, (p. 103.);
 81. engage your self, whenever his Lord-
 ship shall please to appear in Defense of the
 King's-Head Story, or any other Pretence
 against our *Episcopal Ordination* when we de-
 parted from Rome, to show your self so far a
 with Protestant, as to answer any Popish Ar-
 guments his Lordship can produce: you
 the fully Err from the Point. For the Que-
 ry, is not, according to the Principles
 of Bishop was writing against, whether
 as Reformers received their *Ordination*
 from the Church of Rome, which no One,
 I know of, denies they did; but,
 whether their *Schism*, and Breaking off
 from That Church which gave Them their
 Orders, does not invalidate and null
 their Orders? Certainly on your *Princi-*
 ples, They do. And, if you say they do
 not, the Inference is plain and easy; that,
 at the *Reformation*, the Bishops who
 adhered to the *Corruptions of Popery* were
 deposed, and others placed in their
 stead by the King's Authority, without
 any Imputation of *Schism*: so at the
 Revolution, Those Bishops who adhered
 to the *Abdicated King*, against the Laws,
 and

and Happiness, and Liberty of their Country, and refused to give the necessary security to the Government Established Law and Justice; were justly, to secure us against the Mischief They had in their Power to do Us, and actually were every where doing to us, *deprived* according to our Laws; and others placed their Stead by the *King's* Authority; all this without any Just Imputation of *Schism*. If *Schism* in one Case follow for the same Reason it must have followed in the other: unless you can prove one Case to have been justifiable, and the other not. And then you will take in the Argument from the Necessity of *Successions*, and place it wholly on the Merits of the Cause: which you never will do, but which we are always desirous you would do; and are most ready to engage with you upon that Head. And if *Schism* in one Case destroyed the *Succession*, it consequently render'd null and void the *God's Ordinances*; for the same Reason must have done it in the Other. Or if you must own again, that we are to judge upon the Merits of the Cause; which is all that we desire. When you show a Difference here; and prove that the *stripping Bishops*, was not *Schism* at the *Reformation*, tho' it might be *Schism* at the

Resolution: I shall own that you answer
 the Reproach of being Self-condemned;
 which is all that you will answer by doing
 so. But you will come never the nearer
 proving that it was *Schism*, to deprive the
 Pops at the Revolution; or that any
 the dismal Consequences, which you are
 now painting out, attended that *Depri-*
tion: because, as I have shewn, that
 depends on Arguments of a quite different
 nature from These.

THE III^d Objection you pretend to
 answer, is, (*p. 105.*), That this *Uninter-*
rupted Succession is a Popish Doctrine, and
gives Papists Advantage over us. But I
 have already shewn how unjust a Repre-
 sentation it was of the *Objection*, to say
 that it was only; *this is a Popish Doctrine,*
 and therefore cannot be True: whereas
 really was; *this is One of the Corrupt*
Doctrines of Popery, and therefore cannot
be received by Protestants, who profess to
avoid the same, and to continue in a Separation
from, the Corruptions of Popery. You
 are here to be sensible of this; and, tho'
 you answer but one Part of the *Objection*,
 yet set down both Parts of it: both, *that*
this is a Popish Doctrine, and that it gives
Papists Advantage over us. Now, I agree
 with you that a Thing's being a *Popish*
Doctrine, if it be a True Doctrine, is no
 Ar-

Argument against it even to a *Protestant* may, its *Giving* the *Papists* Advantage as is *None*, if the Thing be *True*; becau in that Case, we ought to be so far from being *Papists*, as the *Papists* are in the Right; we should not be frightened away from the Truth by *Scare-Crows*, odious Appellations on any Side. But the True Sense in which your Notions of *Uninterrupted Succession* were condemned as *Popish Doctrines* (not as *True Doctrines*, tho' *Popish*, but as *False Doctrines*, held by the *Papists*, which could only serve their Cause, is argued from consistently. If, therefore, we can either justify the *Reformation* on its Principles from the just Imputation of *Schism*; or show that, let the *Reformation* be defended as it can, *Uninterrupted Successions* are still absolutely necessary to its *Validation*: you will either take off the Force of this *Objection* as to *Protestantism*, which will not, in that Case, stand condemned by your *Principles*; or will, I confess, force the Private Interest of *Protestantism* to yield, as I think it ought to do to Truth, which is the Interest of *All* Religion. But till you shall have done this, the *Objection* will remain in its full Strength.

THESE are all the *Objections* against your Notions, which you take any

of, or so much as pretend to answer
 what Reason you passed by those o-
 bjections, taken from the *Nature*
Attributes of God; from the First Prin-
 ciples of All *Religion*; whether because
 you thought them not considerable e-
 nough for you to employ your Time in
 answering, or for any more prevailing
 reason: I will not take on me to judge.
 I will only take the Liberty to say to
 you; that, however contemptible, and
 unworthy of your Notice, any Objections
 that might have appeared to you;
 were *Other Persons*, with whom I do
 not pretend to name my self, whom you
 do not give your self the Air of neg-
 lecting, without leaving it too plain to all
 the World to judge for what Reason you
 say so; and to believe that you said no-
 thing in Answer to Them, only because
 you had really nothing to say.
 You conclude (p. 106.) with defending
 your self as to another Point in your for-
 mer letter. The Case stands thus: The
 Apostle asserted that the Whole of our
 Faith to God's Favour depended upon
 his Mercy. Upon this you accuse his Lord-
 ship (and you bring it as an Argument
 against his Doctrine,) that He sets *several*
ag Quakers, Socinians, Mugletonians, (you
 say) have recounted Twenty other hard
 Names,)

Names;) and all Hereticks and Schismatics upon the same Bottom, as to the Favour of God; with sincere Christians. The Consequence was allowed you, supposing They all equally sincere: but it was said, whether They were so or not, God, who discerns the Hearts of Men, only knows, and was to judge; and that no Fallible Men knew, and consequently could not have a Right to Judge. All that Men in that Case can do, if they see Others on what They think a wrong Way, is to offer Arguments to their Conscience, to stir up to Sincerity; and to stir them up to Examination: but have no Authority to condemn, nay cannot determine, whether they Examine sincerely, or not, nor punish them if They Err, that They err thro' *sincerity*; nor, if they err, thro' *Frailty* and in the *Sincerity* of their Heart, to declare Them out of God's Favour. There is most Any Person upon Earth can reasonably say to another, in such Circumstances, is this: If you are sincere, God will accept you, as He will accept them that *diligently seek Him*: If you are not sincere, you are self-condemned. This, and this is agreeable to what St. John (1 Ep. iii.) assures us of; *If our Heart, says He, condemn us not, then have we Confidence to approach God*: which Assertion of the Apo-

it can be allowed to be True on your
 Principles, or be made consistent with
 Favour, I cannot see. This was not call-
 ing upon you to prove the Sincerity of
 the several Sorts of People possible; (and I
 said, now of no body that called upon you to
 do any such thing;) but only arguing
 from the Supposition of *their Sincerity*
 to the Consequences that
 would follow thence, as to the Favour or
 Pleasure of Almighty God; which was
 the only Point in Question.

is again (p. 107.), you *humbly supposed*
 that you might be sincere in his Religious O-
 bedience, tho' it might be owing to some ill
 humours, or something Criminal in Himself,
 where He was fallen into such or such a Way of
 thinking. To this it was said, that Real
 Sincerity, was not consistent with ill Hu-
 mours and Criminal Behaviour; but would
 lead us to throw them off; and that
 if these are retained, there Sincerity is
 not real: that Sincerity leads us not only
 to embrace the Truth, when we see it;
 but to search for the Truth, that we may
 find it, and embrace it; and to take Pains
 in this Search; without which we cannot
 claim to the Privileges of Sincerity,
 to be Acceptable to God; who has given
 us Reason and Understanding, to lead us
 to search and examine, before we venture
 upon

upon Actions of any visible Import
to us. Instead of answering to all
directly, you only endeavour to
by changing the *Terms*, and so to
the Force of the Argument. *It seems*
you, all this is Contradiction; and no
can be sincere, who has any Faults, or
Faults have any Influence on his
Thinking. Now, I think, I need
further; but may stop here, and
to all the World, whether *Ill Habits*
Guilty Behaviour implied no more
than *Faults having some Influence on*
of Thinking: or, whether there is no
ference between One that falls into
after having taken some Pains in
ning, thro' a Weakness of Understan
or the Want of any other Talents,
Pardonable Heedlessness, that any
may sometimes be subject to; and
that lives in Error, and practises Vi
on that Error, thro' a voluntary and
tinu'd Neglect of Examining, and a
Indifference as to knowing whether
He does will please, or displease *Al*
God.

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